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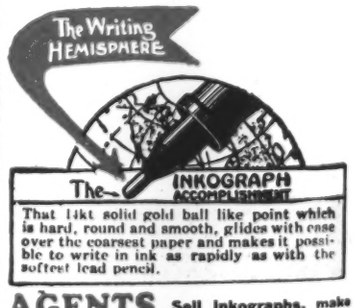

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Vol. 57

McCLURE'S

THE MAGAZINE OF ROMANCE

Arthur McKeogh, *Editor*

No. 4

October

1926

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If every married woman *had a trained nurse for a sister*

Some women receive wrong or incomplete advice . . . but science has developed a safe antiseptic comparable in strength with carbolic acid. An antiseptic that is absolutely non-poisonous . . .

Some of the most important things in a woman's life are the most difficult to discuss, and one of them is the subject of feminine hygiene. Thousands of women today are running continual risk through the use of poisonous, caustic antiseptics such as bichloride of mercury or the compounds of carbolic acid.

Physicians deplore the use of these dangerous germicides, but many women are too shy or timid to ascertain the real facts. Others receive wrong or incomplete advice from people who are no better informed than themselves. If every married woman had a trained nurse for a sister, there would be far less misery from this source, because nurses, like physicians, are well aware of the dangers that lie in every bottle that displays the deadly skull-and-crossbones on its label.

Safety for little children

Besides the caustic, corrosive effect which carbolic acid compounds possess when in contact with delicate membranes, there is the constant danger of accidental poisoning, especially with little children in the house. The tragedies growing out of such accidents are common enough, as every newspaper reader knows.

Fortunately it is no longer necessary to run these risks. Science has at last developed a true antiseptic, a real germicide, that is *powerful and effective, but safe.* It is called Zonite, and while it is comparable in strength with the poisonous antiseptics already discussed, it can be applied without danger to the most delicate membranes and tissues of the body.

Zonite is in reality a scientific marvel. It is *more than forty times as effective* germicidally as peroxide of hydrogen. It is *far stronger than any dilution of carbolic acid* that can be safely applied to the human body. And yet Zonite, powerful as it is, can actually be held in the mouth. In fact, dentists are recommending it freely for oral hygiene.

Welcomed by women

No wonder Zonite has been welcomed by refined, enlightened women, as well as the medical and nursing professions. For Zonite has encouraged the wholesome, scientific practice of feminine hygiene, which means so much to woman's comfort, beauty and health-assurance.

Zonite is fatal to germs, but safe for human beings. It will not burn, harden nor scar the delicate tissue-linings, as the old poisonous antiseptics do, even when they are greatly diluted. Zonite is clean and wholesome and perfectly safe to have around the house. It is safe in the hands of a child.

Zonite can now be obtained at practically every drugstore in the United States. Knowledge has spread rapidly of its splendid qualities, especially its safety in use. Probably women in your own circle are using it.

Send for this booklet

Full directions for the use of Zonite accompany every bottle, but if you are interested in the subject of feminine hygiene you will want to have the special booklet which the Women's Division has prepared. It deals also with other affairs of the toilette—mouth, scalp, complexion, etc. It is daintily illustrated and the information it contains is concise and to the point. It is frankly written but delicately treated. It is a book every mother will want to show her daughter. Use the coupon below. Zonite Products Company, Postum Building, 250 Park Avenue, New York, N. Y.

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A few years ago I was working in a shop for $15 a week. Immediately upon completion of my course I was offered a position through N. S. T. A. My earnings were from $5,000 to $6,500 per year. Today I am earning $7,500 per year.

James Jacobsen, Winchester, Ky.

When I took up the N. S. T. A. course, I was selling shoes for $35 a week. Now I am earning an average of $135 a week. I attribute this remarkable progress to N. S. T. A. training.

F. B. Englehardt, Chattanooga, Tenn.

Without this training I would still be working for the other fellow. This year I will make close to $7,000 — *some* increase since my enrollment.

Frank Walsh, Springfield, Mass.

I was clearing around $1,000 a year when I was enrolled with N. S. T. A. I have increased my income to $7,286. I now own my home, drive a nice car, and have a summer camp. My grateful thanks to N. S. T. A.

You're Fooling Yourself

-if You Think These Big Pay Records Are Due to LUCK!

J. E. GREENSLADE

But don't take my word for it! When I tell you that you can quickly increase your earning power; I'LL PROVE IT! FREE! I'll show you hundreds of men like yourself who have done it. And I'll show you how you can do it, too

I'LL come directly to the point. First you'll say, "I could never do it, these men were lucky." But remember the men whose pictures are shown above are only four out of thousands and if you think it's luck that has suddenly raised thousands of men into the big pay class *you're fooling yourself.*

Easy to Double Salary

But let's get down to your own case. You want more money. You want the good things in life, a comfortable home of your own where you can entertain, a snappy car, membership in a good club, good clothes, advantages for your loved ones, travel and a place of importance in your community. All this can be yours. And I'll prove it to you, FREE.

First of all get this one thing right —such achievement is not luck—it's KNOWING HOW! And KNOWING HOW in a field in which your opportunities and rewards are ten times greater than in other work. In short, I'll prove that I can make you a Master Salesman—and you know the incomes good salesmen make.

Every one of the four men shown above was sure that he could never SELL! They thought Salesmen were "born" and not "made!" When I said, "Enter the Selling Field where chances in your favor are ten to one," they said it couldn't be done. But I proved to them that this Association could take any man—regardless of his station in life, regardless of his present job, or lack of selling experience—and in a short time make a MASTER SALESMAN of him—make him capable of earning anywhere from $5,000 to $10,000 a year. And that's what I'm willing to prove to you, FREE.

Simple as A B C

You may think my promise remarkable. Yet there is nothing remarkable about it. Salesmanship is governed by rules and laws. There are certain ways of saying and doing things, certain ways of approaching a prospect to get his undivided attention, certain ways to overcome objections, batter down prejudices and outwit competition.

Just as you learned the alphabet, so you can learn salesmanship. And through the NATIONAL DEMONSTRATION METHOD —an exclusive feature of the N. S. T. A. System of Salesmanship Training—you gain the equivalent of actual experience while studying.

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The N. S. T. A. System of Salesmanship Training and Employment Service will enable you to quickly step into the ranks of successful salesmen—will give you a big advantage over those who lack this training. It will enable you to jump from small pay to a real man's income.

Remarkable Book, Sent FREE

With my compliments I want to send you a most remarkable book, "Modern Salesmanship."

It will show you how you can easily become a master salesman—a big moneymaker—how the N. S. T. A. System of Salesmanship Training will give you years of selling experience in a few weeks; how our FREE Employment Service will help select and secure a good selling position when you are qualified and ready. And it will give you success stories of former routine workers who are now earning amazing salaries as salesmen. Mail the coupon today. In every man's life there is one big moment when he makes the decision that robs him of success—or leads him on to fortune. This may be your turning point.

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"AUTHOR! AUTHOR!"

What Would YOU do with $1,000—Out of the Sky?

McCLURE'S Writers Tell What a Windfall Would Have Meant to Them as Beginners

Marceline d' Alroy

HERE'S another "first story" introduced by McCLURE'S—*Nix on the Frau,* by **MAURICE MARKS.** Mr. Marks is a member of a writing family, Rita Weiman, the well-known author and playwright, being his wife. "My vocation," says Mr. Marks, "is advertising; my avocation writing. And if anybody had given me a thousand dollars when I started writing I might have become a surgeon. However nobody did, so I hope it is for the general good that I employ ink instead of ether to reach the public's risibilites."

WALLACE IRWIN, whose *Gas Man* this month "says it with signs," treats with his usual seriousness the question of what he would have done with a thousand dollars had somebody given it to him when he began writing. Says he: "Had I fallen heir to such a sum on the day I began writing for a living I would have hired a good statistician to prove to me that there was that much money in the world!"

PAUL DERESCO AUGSBURG is the author of *The Girl Who Would Go to the Devil.* He was born in Salt Lake City in 1897, graduated from the University of California in 1919 and is now a seasoned newspaperman. Concerning the hypothetical thousand dollars he says: "In that bitter period when I first began to write, had somebody given me that amount of money, I'm not sure I wouldn't have hired some good thorough gunman to bump off certain editors who were anything but kind to me. Now, however, in my mellow, kindly old age—" he's twenty-nine—"I view the past with less rancor; so I think I would have made the thousand go as far as possible in living expenses, hoping that before it was all gone I would have sold something."

FRANK MARTIN WEBBER, the author of *E Pluribus Unum,* is Mrs. Harry F. Webber of Detroit. She was born and educated in the South, married a Yankee aviator, and says she has become so far acclimated that she has forgotten the Mason and Dixon line. She has been writing for three years. "I never laid eyes on a magazine editor," says she, "but I think he must be something like an archangel. If anybody had given me a thousand dollars when I began writing I'm afraid I'd just have stuck it in the bank and gone on writing."

FREDERICK R. BECHDOLT, author of *The Little Baggage,* lives at Carmel, California. He sold his first story to the old McClure's in 1904. If anybody had given him a thousand dollars when he began writing he says he probably would have quit newspaper work then—and regretted it later.

JESSE GELDERS, the author of *Sax Appeal,* is a New Yorker, born in Atlanta. As to the thousand dollars: "If," says he, "*IF,* in caps, such a thing could happen to any one, let alone to me, I suppose I would have waked up. It would have been just my luck. As it was I dreamed on for two years before starting in to collect editors' rejection slips in a serious business."

ELIZABETH TROY is Mrs. John E. D. Coffey of Williamsport, Pa. Her story is called *A Husband's Spots* and had any one given her a thousand dollars when she began writing, only a year ago, she thinks she probably "would have stayed awake nights wondering in which of a hundred places obviously waiting it would do the most good."

L. MORESBY is almost as mysterious a personage as Warner Fabian. Each conceals his identity under a pen-name. The former is the author of *The Captain Herself.*

WARWICK DEEPING, author of *The New Eve,* the remarkable serial starting in this month's *McClure's,* is an Englishman who was educated at Trinity, Cambridge. He is a physician by training, and practised a year and a half before he began to write seriously. His hobby is landscape gardening and the restoration of lovely old Georgian houses, so it is safe to guess what would happen to any thousand dollar windfall that blew his way.

A. A. CAFFREY, author of *No Brains,* offers the following information concerning himself: Born: Lawrence, Mass. Ability: Poor, but willing flyer. Wrong Thought: My friends think *"No Brains"* is an autobiography. He further adds that "if at any time I had a thousand—or any part—I would spend it knocking around the different army fields gathering dope for articles and stories on flying."

DOUGLAS NEWTON lives in England. His story *The Gossamer Girl* is all about the impetuous way an Englishman falls in love.

MARCELINE d' ALROY who writes the *Diary of a Little French Girl* is a Frenchwoman whose home—when she is at home—is in Paris. For the past five years she has been in this country lecturing and writing. But her most unique as well as individual accomplishment is that of a department-store style adviser. Concerning the one thousand dollars Mademoiselle D'Alroy says: "I might have flirted with it but in the end I should have tucked it away for a rainy day."

HAZEL CHRISTIE MACDONALD has written a delightful love story *To Be Taken After Meals*—or any old time. As to the thousand dollar proposition, so small a sum does not intrigue her in the least! "For," says she, "I was given much more than one thousand at the very beginning of my career for a story that a certain movie company happened to fancy. I placed it in a bank and began the ecstatic business of writing checks. But the money, unfortunately, was not made of rubber. In a few short months all was over—but it was glorious while it lasted!"

BILLY JONES and **ERNEST HARE** are the real names of "The Happiness Boys" dear to the hearts of all radio fans. They appear in this month's *McClure's* as *Just a Couple of Loud Speakers.* Billy was born in New York and began scattering happiness by clerking in a bank every day except Sunday when he sang in a choir. He says that if he had had a thousand dollars then he would have speculated with it and is sure he would be many times a multi-millionaire by now. Ernest was born in Baltimore and originally combined choir singing with the duties of selling baking-powder. A thousand dollars at that time would have started him on a trip around the world.

WARNER FABIAN, whose serial *Summer Bachelors* draws to a dramatic conclusion next month, says exactly one thousand dollars fell into his pocket just as he was beginning writing. And every cent of it was spent to make a dream come true—"What everybody ought to do with unexpected money," he says.

CORNELL WOOLRICH is the author of *Dance It Off.* He was born in Mexico City twenty years ago of Canadian parents. For the past seven years he has lived in New York, and his first writing attempt was the novel, "Cover Charge," which was published about a year ago and has enjoyed a flattering success. "I wrote it while recuperating from a breakdown," he explains, "and had anybody given me a thousand dollars then I'd have kicked everything overboard and gone straight to Europe for a good rest."

The Biscuit

Verses by
BERTON BRALEY

Drawing by
ARTHUR WILLIAM BROWN

WE THOUGHT that Irene was a Biscuit,
She never would get in a clinch;
The kid was too proper to risk it—
The thought of a kiss made her flinch.

She never would snuggle or nestle,
The slightest advances she'd check;
And girls who were willing to wrestle
Would win from Irene by a neck!

The rest of us janes used to snicker
At Irene's Victorian calm,
For none of the fellows would pick her
Or date her to drag to a Prom.

We often would hear her remarking,
"This soft stuff I cannot abide;
My motto is always 'No Parking'
Whenever I go for a ride."

Her line didn't win admiration,
The college boys gave her the gate.
And then—she came back from vacation
With a Solitaire big as a plate!

We'd thought that Irene was a blister,
We found she was cagey, that kid,
And planned that the baby who kissed her
Should mean it each time that he did!

Well, that shows how clever her hunch is—
The Biscuit is soon to be tied,
While each of the rest of the bunch is
A bridesmaid but never a Bride.

A Deeply Human Story of a Girl Who Went to Two Extremes

The NEW

CHAPTER 1

WHEN she was quite a small child some one had asked Mary Viner why she so disliked going to school, and had received the pregnant reply—"'Cos one does the same thing every day." At the age of three and twenty Mary was still resenting repetition. Only more so, because life had become more busily full of it, a circus of dreary tidyings and cleanliness, of moments that smelt of yellow soap, and tea leaves, and paraffin.

Moreover, it could not be helped. The turning of the domestic wheel demanded the obedient hands of the dutiful daughter. Incidentally, she had not a penny of her own, and her dress allowance was as short as the modern skirt.

Mary's alarm clock set the welkin ringing at half past six. It was winter, January and cold. She had cause to know how cold it could be in that cardboard box of a bedroom with its walls of tiles and plywood sheeting. Thank heaven she had not to struggle with half a yard of black hair. A bobbed head has its advantages when your hands get colder and colder.

The house was very still, but across the landing there traveled a faint sound of harsh, asthmatic breathing. Captain Hesketh Viner was asleep, but soon she would hear the little twittering voice of her mother, like the voice of a rather futile and busy bird.

Oh, this house—this Green Shutters, where everything was heard, from the stirring of the kitchen fire to the brisk functioning of a tooth brush! And her father's cough! What a life for the three of them, cooped up in this gimcrack cottage! No wonder that Carslake, solid Georgian Carslake, referred to the Sandihurst estate as Cinder Town.

"Damn Colonel Sykes! Oh, damn him," was her inward cry as she lit her candle and scuffled into her clothes. Yes, damn Colonel Sykes for exploiting this patch of clay and sand, and for persuading the new poor to put up bungalows. Cinder Town! She slithered down the steep and narrow stairs and into the kitchen.

Putting her candle on the kitchen table, and bending down to fill the stove with coal she signalized her submission to the tyranny of trifles by a sudden rush of tears. And like a child she brushed the blurring wetness away with her fingers, forgetting the coal dust upon them. She

His voice held her at the gate for a moment, very still, looking at him.

EVE

By
WARWICK DEEPING

Author of
the Best-Seller,
"SORRELL and SON"

put a match to the kitchen fire, and while it was deciding whether it would burn she collected the cans for the morning's hot water. How she yearned for gas!

The hands of the grandfather clock stood at twenty past seven when Mary crossed the little hall between the kitchen and the living room. There was that second fire to be laid and lit; and if there was one thing she loathed it was cleaning out a grate on a cold winter morning. A beastly job. She pulled on her gloves, and kneeling was about to start on the grate when she heard the front door-bell burr loudly.

It startled her. No one was to be expected at this hour but that very red-nosed boy with the milk, and he always came to the back door.

She went to open the door, and saw a man on the door-step. A milk can kept him company.

"Oh, the milk."

She stared and he seemed to stare still harder, for she had black smudges all over her face. And then she realized that this was Furze of Doomsday Farm. Something must have happened to the red-nosed boy.

"I'll get a jug."

Returning, she was aware of him in the dim light as something big and brown and silent, with a pair of very dark eyes set deeply under the brim of his hat. His face had ruggedness. It was clean shaven, and his lips were very firm. When he took the jug from her she noticed the fineness of his hands, delicate even in their roughened strength. He bent down to fill the jug.

"What has happened to the boy?"

"Laid up."

His voice was deliberate and deep. He was looking at her again, a pretty, dark thing in an old cherry-colored jumper and black skirt. Those smudges of coal dust on her face might have amused him had he been the sort of man who is easily amused, but his glance went deeper. A pretty girl—and a gentlewoman—cleaning a grate on a

January morning! And yet why shouldn't she? He handed her the jug.

"Will that do for the day?"

Her eyes were on his big brown hands. Standing there under the flimsy porch he seemed to fill the whole of the sky with a significance that puzzled her. He did not belong to Cinder Town; he was part of that other world that had preceded and would outlast a little collection of bungalows.

"I think it will do. I expect you are busy."

"I am."

He picked up the milk can, half lifted his hat, and with another of those deep and curiously silent glances, swung away down the cinder path.

MARY placed the can of hot water on the mat outside her people's door. She knocked.

"A quarter to eight."

Her father began to cough, and she could picture his poor bald, birdlike head growing pink on its thin neck. These spasms of coughing seemed to shake the flimsy little house. Her mother's voice, twittering like a robin's, caused her to pause.

"Mary, dear, your father will have his breakfast in bed."

A tray to be laid as well as a table! Well, what of it? If drudgery was your lot complete submergence did not matter. She carried her own can of hot water into her bedroom, and pulling up the blind discovered in place of a dead white surface a panel picture of surprising beauty. It was strange and unexpected, and it hurt her. She wondered why it hurt. She stood and looked at a red winter sun against the great knoll of beeches purpling the sky above Doomsday; the mysterious stateliness of the Six Pines, and beyond them the airy tops of a larch plantation. It was very beautiful and sad and strange, with color tossed about, and that red sun edging the cloud-fringes with gold. It hurt her. It made her yearn for all sorts of unimaginable things—escape, romance, dreamy happenings, a world other than her own.

She looked into her mirror.

"Heavens——!"

No wonder the man with the milk had stared. She was all smudged under the eyes with coal dust. She saw herself as a flustered little seven-o'clock-in-the-morning slattern too hurried to be clean. A kind of rage seized her. She splashed the hot water into her basin, and soaped and toweled herself before rushing downstairs with red eyes, and a sense of being driven to do a dozen different things at once. More coal had to be put on the fire, the frying pan greased, the kettle filled, the cloths laid on tray and table; spoons, plates, knives, cups and saucers, bread, butter, marmalade to be collected. And while she hurried about, she remembered that an hour hence she would be washing up the greater number of them and putting them back in their places.

Oh—that washing up, that eternal getting out and putting away! Repetition, endless repetition! The woman's part! And she seemed to feel in the core of her consciousness the passionate impulse to escape from it. Yes, from that tyranny of trifles that seemed to her to be the whole end and tragedy of a woman's life.

She heard her mother coming downstairs.

"Mary, dear."

"Yes, mother."

"Your father will have a lightly boiled egg this morning. And some toast."

So there would be toast and a lightly boiled egg as well as the bacon! And while she bustled about, her mother sat on a stool in front of the living room fire, rubbing her thin little hands. Mrs. Viner had a stagnant circulation and a habit of inertia which did not fit her birdlike appearance. Yet it was a cheerful, twittering inertia. She perched there just like a young old bird waiting for the breakfast worm, while her daughter did all the work, and wondered why she did it.

Her parents' tacit

Drawings by Arthur Litle

Furze stood under the Six Pines looking down on Cinder Town.

His eyes besought her. She was here in his house, touching his possessions.

acceptance of the situation was the most depressing part of the whole business; they took everything for granted; they were so patient and sweet and unseeing. They exercised their claims upon her with such complete confidence that sometimes she wished she had been born with her sister Clare's temper and her determination to get out of the devoted niceness of it all.

She thrust the prongs of the toasting fork into a slice of bread, and crouched in front of the kitchen fire. The toast grew brown and she thought of Clare. Yes, Clare had been selfishly wise. She had insisted upon self, and none too gently either. Hence a husband, and a house at Weyfleet in Surrey, and tennis and bridge parties and dances, and shoppings and matinées in town, and two servants, and early tea brought to you in bed. Clare's letters were full of happenings.

The toast fell off the fork into the ashes.

"Oh, damn!" said the girl.

CHAPTER II

ARNOLD FURZE of Doomsday had paused for a moment where the Melhurst and Rotherbridge roads joined each other to become the road to Carslake, for though his day's work began before dawn and went on after dusk he was one of those men who can spare his soul five minutes. A hundred yards further up the Carslake road his farm lane emerged north of the bank where the Six Pines grew, and on reaching the lane he left his empty milk can by the hedge, and climbed up beside the trunk of one of the six old trees.

Furze stood looking down on the abominable little dwellings that dotted the Sandihurst estate. There were thirteen of them, strung on each side of the cinder track that Colonel Sykes had had made between his red and white bungalow and the road to Melhurst.

Furze knew every one of the thirteen dwellings. He supplied the colony with milk and eggs and cord-wood and an occasional load of manure. His bills went in once a month.

"What a collection," he thought.

They were of all shapes and sizes, and they agreed in nothing but in their flimsy newness. Colonel Sykes' red brick bungalow headed the formation. Oak Lodge, a mock oak and plaster cottage in the Tudor style, contained the Jimmisons. Next to it stood Green Shutters, the home of the Viners, half brick and half tile. Following south came The Oast, a pathetic improvisation contrived out of a circu-

lar steel shelter with an old railway coach attached to it, the whole painted a bright green, and inhabited by a one-eyed ex-lieutenant, Harold Coode. In his hurry to recoup himself after his speculation in land Colonel Sykes had sold the plots without troubling himself about building restrictions.

As Furze scrambled down to the lane and picked up his milk can his thoughts remained with Cinder Town. He saw in it one of those improvisations flung up by the confused flux of the post-war period. The new poor! Impoverished gentlefolk drawn together in a little world of makeshifts, withering, waiting to die. It was rather pathetic. And that girl with the smudgy face, and the soft eyes who had taken in the milk? Deputizing as a maid of all work? Well, anyway she did a woman's work, though it might be because she could not help it.

Passing on up the farm lane between high hedges of thorn and ash and maple, with the Ten Acre on his right, and the Ridge Field on his left, Arnold Furze returned to a world that seemed solid and real. He paused, as he often did, just above the pond. From this point, he could command the greater part of his farm. Immediately below him stretched the pond and the larch plantation; beyond lay the yard and the stone farm buildings, their gray walls and rust-colored roof patched with yellow lichen. Rushy Pool and Rushy Wood were hidden by the larches and the house, but above the swelling browniness of the Sea Field, the beeches of Beech Ho seemed to carry the sky on their branches. Eastwards, along the slope of the valley the greenness of the Long Meadow met the deeper green of the oaks of Gore Wood.

HIS walking was like his touching her—an act that was sensitive and manly.

To Furze it was very beautiful. For five years now he had been able to call Doomsday his. He had fought it, loved it, wrestled with it, and there had been times when it had threatened to tear the guts from him. But that was life. Better than finicking about in an office.

He went on and down to the path above the yard. A middle-aged man was forking manure out of the cow shed. Furze called to him.

"Will."

"Sssir——"

"We'll cart that wood up from the Gore. I'll be with you in ten minutes."

The laborer thrust the fork into a pile of smoking dung, and went with long trailing steps towards the stable, turning to glance over his shoulder at Furze who was disappearing behind the yew hedge that screened a part of the garden. But there was no garden there now, only coarse grass and a few old unpruned roses. Arnold Furze had no time for life's embroideries.

Doomsday farmhouse had been built by a Sussex ironmaster in Elizabeth's day, and to this man of iron it owed its stone walls, its stone mullions, and its brick chimneys. The parlor, jutting out queerly towards Mrs. Damaris's sunk garden, had a roof of Horsham stone; but Mrs. Damaris had been dead a hundred and seventy years, and her sunk garden had become a sunny place where hens clucked and yellow chicks toddled over the grass.

From the window of the parlor you looked over Mrs. Damaris's little sunk garden to the high ground on the other side of the brook, a tree-covered cliff in which were cleft blue vistas of woods and shining hills, and white clouds low down on the horizon by the sea. The sea was fifteen miles away, but when Arnold Furze was hoeing turnips up in the Sea Field he could see the gray flicker between him and the old memories of France and the war. The birds in these Sussex woods had heard the rumble of the guns in those days, guns at Ypres, guns on the bloody, white-hilled, red-poppied Somme. Furze had been with those guns, the captain of a 45 howitzer battery. It seemed very long ago.

A year as a learner on a farm in Hampshire, and five years at Doomsday! Five notable, terrible, and glorious years, full of sweat and hate and love and weariness, and a back that had refused to break, and a stomach that would digest anything. Lonely? Yes, in a way. But when a man has cows and sheep and pigs, horses, a dog, a cat, and a number of odd hens and ducks to look after, his hands are full of life. No, a man had no time to be lonely, with Will Blossom and Will Blossom's boy and himself to work a hundred and twenty acres, though thirty acres of it were woodland. Five years!

He came up the stone steps to the door. His boots were all yellow clay, and there were spots of it upon his face. He shaved himself twice a week. Bobbo, the sheep-dog, sneaked in at his heels, and making for the log fire on the great open hearth, lay down to share it with Furze's black cat. The floor of the living room was of red tiles, which made it safe for Arnold to keep a wood fire burning and to pile upon it three or four times a day the butts of old posts and the roots of trees. In the winter this fire never went out. He kept his logs in the living room, a great pile of them stacked in a corner.

Here, too, an iron kettle was usually simmering on the hook. Tea-making was a simple process. The breakfast tea leaves were shaken out of the teapot upon the fire, more tea was added from a canister on the shelf. Milk, a loaf, butter on a white plate, and a pot of jam waited in the cupboard beside the fireplace.

Furze had his tea by the fire. He sat on an oak stool of his own making, like some Sussex peasant of the days before man had realized cushions and comfort. He too was of iron, one of those lean, big, [*Continued on page 80*]

"What's all the rush about," he remarked. "Think you're my time-table?"

By

CORNELL WOOLRICH

Author of "Cover Charge"

Dance It OFF!

WALLY WALTERS had been told more than once that he was a cake eater. Now a cake eater is one who having arrived at years of discretion toils not neither does he spin. In other words he lets the bread and butter of life go by him and concentrates on the cake—sugar icing and all. How he gets away with it is nobody's business. But Wally Walters, in particular, wore a three-cornered, low-crowned hat down over his eyes and nose, with a little green feather stuck in the band. Being unable to fasten a bow-tie himself, he wore his on a rubber band under the collar of his shirt. It looked just as good anyway. His trousers hung about his legs in folds; they extended to the tips of his shoes, and when he walked he looked elephant-footed. The funniest thing about him, though, was his raincoat. When it rained, and sometimes even when it didn't rain, Wally came out in a soapy looking yellow slicker with a little strap around his throat like a dog-collar. On his back he had a drawing of a bobbed-haired flapper in a pink chemise and black silk stockings, and underneath was the legend, "Ain't we got fun," for all the townspeople to marvel at. The blonde cashier at the candy store had done it for him. She had also done some six or eight others. All the boys told her she had a great deal of talent going to waste. She agreed with them.

It is only fair to mention in passing that although Wally Walters was undeniably a cake eater, he never touched cake, or pie either for that matter. He dined in cafeterias whenever he did dine, which wasn't as often as it sounds, and he ate things like ham sandwiches and custards because they cost less and were far more substantial. Several evenings a week he devoted to billiards, but on Saturday nights he was always to be found at the Rainbow, the local dance center, where they took the precaution of searching you for liquor as you went in. Some of the brighter ones got around this by carrying it internally. On Saturday nights Myrtle and Rose and Lily were always to be found there, outdoing one another in the grotesqueries of the Charleston. All that was needed was plenty of room, a pair of strong ankles, and lots of terpsichorean ambition; and these were the very things that Wally Walters seemed to have most of. Consequently he was a howling success and always in demand—as Rose and Myrtle and Lily thought that the cleverest Charleston contortionest was bound to make an ideal husband, in which case they wouldn't have to go out any more but could do their practising right at home.

But not for Wally. He knew too much about girls. Girls were a necessary evil, nice under Japanese lanterns at twelve o'clock with all their bagatelles and war-paint on, but not so nice at nine the next morning over the cereal and the coffee pot. Wally was an idealist. He had dreams and he hated to see them spoilt. He got a little older

and he got a little older, and finally he put his trust in one girl and one only, a girl in a castle of dreams.

There was Carfare Connie. They called her that because she would ride in anything from a limousine to a mail truck, but she always took along about a dollar and a half for spending money. She called it her emergency fund. She'd had the same dollar and a half for over three years now, and still her luck kept up. She used to read the motto engraved on the silver half dollar, "In God We Trust," and smile knowingly to herself, and perhaps rub it on her sleeves to brighten it up a bit. Carfare Connie hadn't had any trouble on automobile rides — much — but she believed in being prepared. Every Saturday night she put on a big, floppy, white picture hat which was nothing but wire and gauze, and wended her merry way to the Rainbow, greeting all passers-by *en route*. She was very fond of Wally Walters. He and she would invent dance steps together.

"Look, cake, how about this one? I thought it up on my way to work this morning."

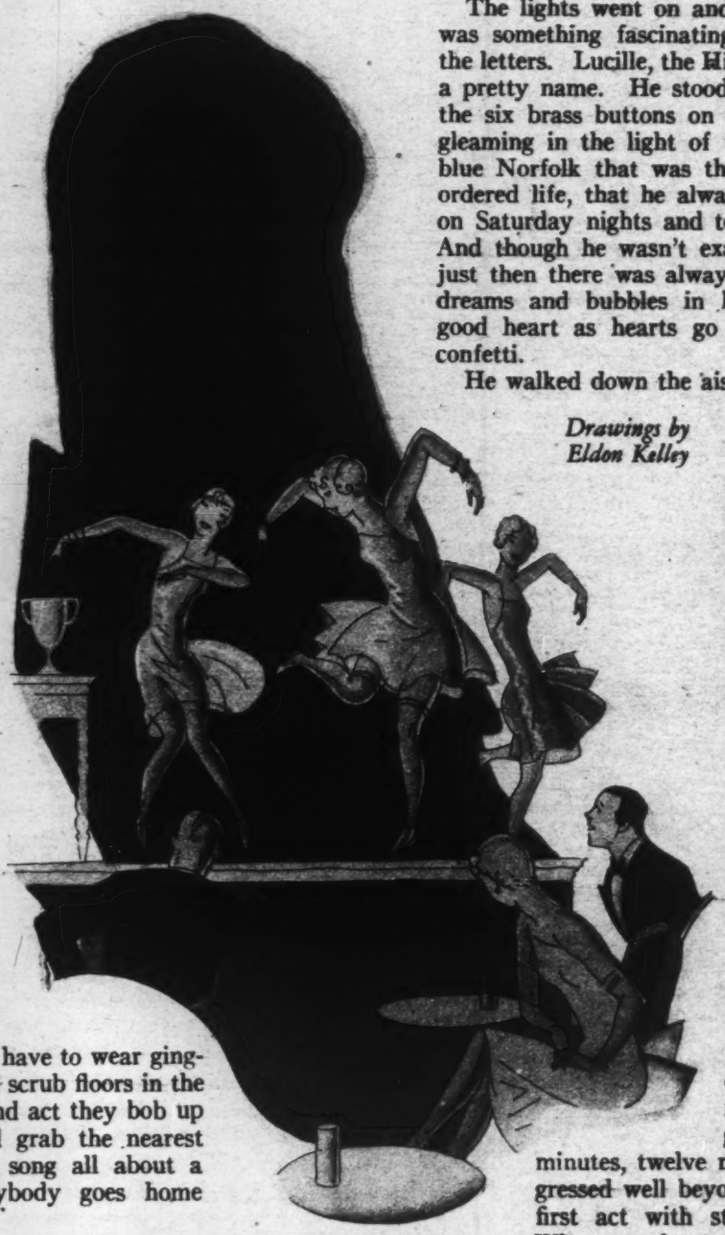
"Show us it."

"Tum tum, te ta ta," said Carfare Connie with great gusto.

"Yeah," he said, "I see what you're driving at. Only look—tum tum, te ta ta—doesn't that work out better?" Giving his version of it.

"Yeah, you've got it ezactly; that's ezactly what I meant." And a girl has to care a good deal for some one before she'll let him change her pet ideas to suit himself.

Now there were six Lucilles all in a row, until one was sent out on the road and then there were only five. Lucille was one of those musical comedy heroines who have to wear gingham and tickle dish-mops and scrub floors in the first act, but then in the second act they bob up all covered with sequins and grab the nearest millionaire's son and sing a song all about a platinum lining. And everybody goes home happy.



Drawings by Eldon Kelley

Rose and Myrtle and Lily spread themselves. They did that thing!

In this case every one went home happy except poor Lucille herself. Lucille hated being sent on the road. It put her in bad humor for weeks and weeks at a time. She missed her gorgeous roof bungalow with its mirrored bath, she missed her Hispano-Fiat with its little green baize card table, she missed her borzoi with its concave stomach. Lucille in this instance was Mimi Travers of New York and Philadelphia, but decidedly not of points west. The whole trouble was the producers seemed to think otherwise. All day long on the train she said things about them not meant for little children to hear; and when night came she sat in her dressing-room with shoes scattered all about her, and delayed getting dressed for the performance until the curtain of that particular theater was three quarters of an hour late and the stage manager threatened to wire New York. Then she slapped on a make-up helter skelter at the last possible moment and made them omit the "Primrose Path" number from the second act, saying she was fed up on it and didn't give a damn.

And it was this same evening that Wally Walters came north along River Street looking like a million dollars going somewhere to get itself squandered. A brand new electric sign caught his eye and he paused to reflect upon it, giving the dimes, quarters, and halves in his pocket a vigorous shaking up.

LUCILLE
the Hit of Hits
One Solid Year in New York

The lights went on and off, on and off. There was something fascinating in the arrangement of the letters. Lucille, the Hit of Hits. Lucille. What a pretty name. He stood in line to buy a ticket, the six brass buttons on his powder-blue Norfolk gleaming in the light of the lobby—that powder-blue Norfolk that was the pride of his silly, disordered life, that he always wore to the Rainbow on Saturday nights and to the chop suey palaces. And though he wasn't exactly thinking about her just then there was always this girl in a castle of dreams and bubbles in his heart—which was a good heart as hearts go but all smothered with confetti.

He walked down the aisle to his seat just as the overture was getting under way. A girl in an upper box smiled when she caught sight of him and made some comment to an older woman beside her. He imagined she wanted to flirt with him so he treated her to one of his studied gazes of approval, and smiled wickedly out of the corners of his mouth. For a few seconds she returned his look with impudent disdain, then she and the older woman both laughed in his face. The lights went out like a whip and he sat down, wondering what had been the matter with those two.

The curtain went up on a sea of legs—the musical comedy had begun. Five minutes, ten minutes, twelve minutes passed. It progressed well beyond the first half of the first act with still no sign of Lucille. Who was she anyway, Wally wondered. What was she waiting for, what was it all about?

Up on the stage a garden party was in progress. A bevy of girls with parasols and aigrets and lorgnettes and feather fans paraded their finery to and fro; and the footlights made shadows play up and down their legs. They stood in battalions and fluttered their fingers from their feet up over their heads. Then all at once he saw her.

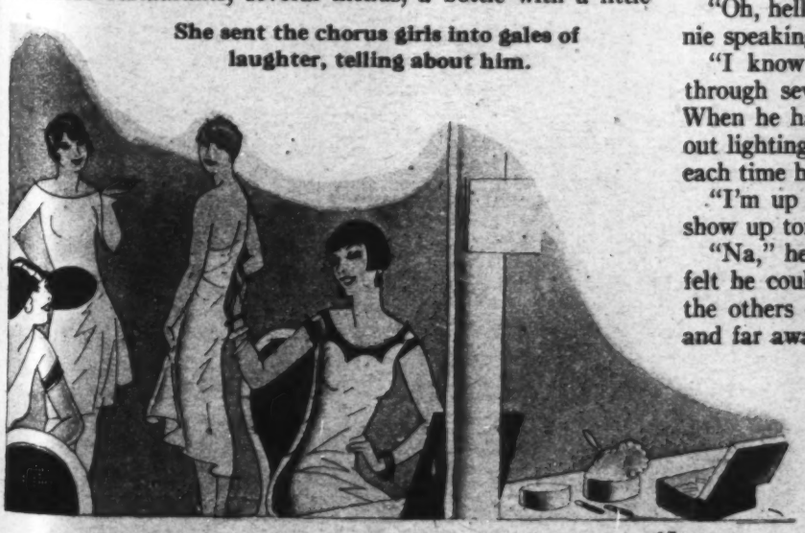
She was in the midst of them. The spotlight picked her out. She was like a guinea-pig among peacocks and flamingoes. Her hair was drawn back into a knot at the back of her head, the way they draw them in the comic strips; and there was a ridiculous little hat perched on top, stabbed with a long pin. Her stockings were red and white wool, striped like sticks of peppermint candy. She had on impossible shoes that buttoned half way up her

calves—yellow shoes. She had a little old Irish terrier under her arm; it had been trained to try and get away from her, and she had to struggle with it to hold it. The people screamed with laughter. The auditorium fairly rocked with it. It dashed itself against the footlights like spray, wave after wave of it. In the balconies people were standing up to get a better view of her.

But Wally Walters never cracked a smile. He sat there staring out at Lucille's pitiful talcumed face, her clownish face with its blued-in eyes and its blacked lips. The stage beauties circled about her, gorgeous with Titian hair and peach bloom make-up. They studied her through lorgnettes and flicked her with their fans and turned their shoulders on her in contempt. They drew back, leaving her standing alone. Even the little terrier had abandoned her at the first opportunity. There was a hush. A thick shaft of very white light fell on her, powdering her ridiculous padded leg-of-mutton shoulders. She began to sing. She sang about a castle of dreams and how it had come tumbling down. And there was nothing left, she said, nothing; she spread her hands and let them fall sidewise with a slap, and sobbed drily deep down in her throat. Then she went shuffling off in her absurd shoes and striped stockings, and on her way out she pretended to trip over something. That brought the entire house down again.

But Wally couldn't laugh, somehow. He knew how it felt, you bet he knew how it felt. His eyes were stinging him. He pulled his hat from beneath the seat and went trudging up the aisle. People wondered why he was leaving so early. Once he looked back over his shoulder. She hadn't come out again. They were doing a Charleston to the little tune she had sung so wistfully; they were clodhopping among the ruins of her dream castle. It didn't matter to him that she was to come back later with a diadem in her hair and paradise tufts on her shoes. He knew how it was when you felt that way. Who would know better than he, always hungering for something out of reach—and not cake, either. He stood out in front of the theater, looking aimlessly up the street without seeing anything. He lit a cigaret and tried to pretend that it was the smoke getting in his throat that made it so dry.

He went home to his room—the "budwa" he called it—and lay on the bed, shoes and all. It was a true image of his life, that small room. Disarranged, meaningless, pitiful, choked with trifles, trying hard to be gay but sad at heart. There was a picture of a motion picture actress, Clara Bow, clipped from a magazine and pasted to the wall. There was a tambourine hanging on a nail, and a gilt false-face hanging from its elastic on another. There were girls' telephone numbers scribbled everywhere, although the landlady was furious about it. On the dresser there was a ten cent store doll with blue cotton batting for hair; some one had penciled a mustache along its upper lip. There was in addition a nickel-plated pocket flask lying on its side, a feathered bamboo tickler from one of the Chinese restaurants, several menus, a bottle with a little



She sent the chorus girls into gales of laughter, telling about him.

"Connie," he said softly, "dreams do come true, sometimes."

hair grease, turned rancid, in the bottom of it, and the remains of a package of cigarets. Also a copper ash-tray with chewing gum stuck to it, and one of orange clay with collar buttons and a toothbrush in it.

Somebody was knocking at his door. He bobbed up. "Who is it?" he demanded. He scratched the back of his head.

"You're wanted on the telefoam," cried the lady of the house through the panel. He heard her go away again.

He unlocked the door and went down to the foot of the staircase. The receiver was hanging on its cord, so low that it almost touched the floor. He had to stoop to pick it up.

"Yeah?" he said constrainedly.

"Oh, hello!" said a girl's voice. "This is Connie. Connie speaking."

"I know," he remarked dispiritedly, fishing the while through several pockets in the effort to locate a cigaret. When he had found one he held it between his lips without lighting it—a dry smoke—and it bobbed up and down each time he had anything to say.

"I'm up at the Rainbow," she said. "Why didn't you show up tonight. Anything wrong?"

"Na," he said, closing his eyes for a brief moment. He felt he couldn't stomach Connie this evening, nor any of the others either. The sound of a band, infinitely small and far away and blurred with other noises, came through the receiver.

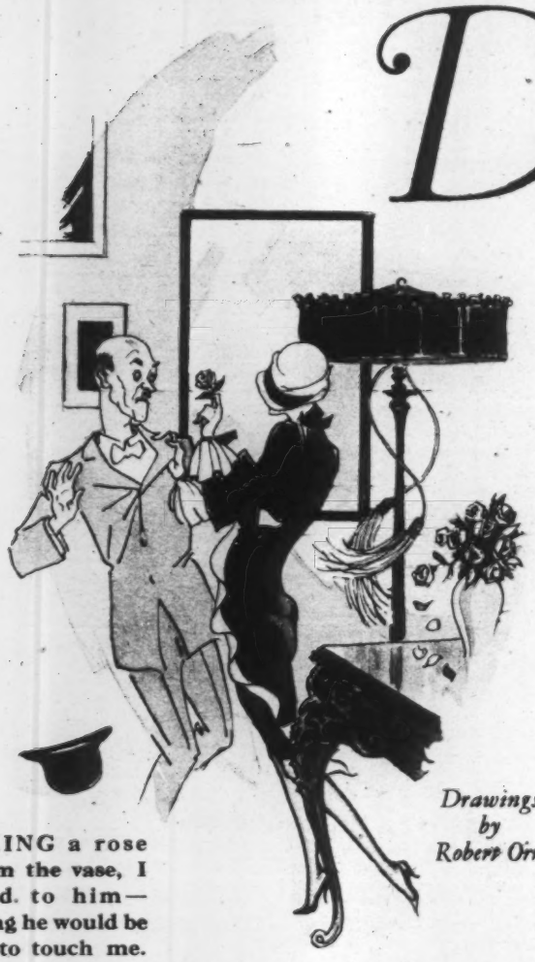
"Hear that?" said Connie. "Doesn't it make you itchy?"

"Hm?" he said, not caring much.

"I'll keep my eye open for you," she went on. "How [*Continued on page 114*]

DIARY of a

Her Adventures as a Stylist in Clothes and the Fashions of Love



Drawings by Robert Orr

TAKING a rose from the vase, I rushed to him—knowing he would be afraid to touch me.

Suite 1220, Ritz-Carlton, New York.
Monday morning—8:30 a. m.

THREE days in America, and I am what they call here "on the job." And how I am on it!

I tremble at all that may be expected from me.

If my stockings were rolled, my knees would be bruised with knocking at each other for company. I always said a girdle was a moral support, and that garters helped to keep weak women straight.

Mon Dieu, but it is something to be brought over from Paris by the firm of Kingsley and Wolfe, the biggest and the best department store on Fifth Avenue, New York, to give exclusive advices to the American woman on how she should dress her charming self, and why, and what for. Yet I can do that. For I know very well Style, and I know women, and I am not ignorant concerning men.

If only I could be certain that all these American men in the store will want from me is advices!

But oh! la la, life is not as simple as that. In the eye of Monsieur Kingsley there is already a twinkle, and the little M. Wolfe look like he watch and prey.

"Yes, I shall be annoyed!" as Ethel, my aide, said yesterday.

Yet, what she calls my "small Frenchy figure" commands, in this country, a good round figure. Translated into francs, the dollars that this firm will pay me suggests that the American woman is not merely sick, she must be literally dying for advice.

But I have to prove myself.

Today I make the big success, or the big failure. The flop I think they call it. Today I do not look on in the store, but I start to act. And soon I shall "sit pretty," or, if I "make not good," I shall "get the air."

Ah! *Mon Dieu.* What will this day do to me?

What a country is this U. S. What a people! What a hurry up! Shall I ever adjust myself?

I feel like I had been thrown far into the sea. I cannot swim, yet I refuse to sink.

Confidence, *ma cherie.* Success is yours, for no one dreams a Frenchwoman knows fear.

Courage, Mousseline, courage.

So, *allons, Enfant de la Patrie, marche.*

Monday Night.

It is over.

They tell me at the store I am a riot. I am also cute, chick, and a knock out! "Knock out" is the only one I understand. It is true, I am nearly dead.

I now have what they call my French Salon at the store. In it I receive the American women and give them my advices.

It has a Louis XIV table, and four Louis XV chairs. But as they are real antiques made to order, I imagine it is probably called the French Room out of courtesy to me.

The president, Mr. Theodore Kingsley, has visited me there this morning and asked me if I liked it.

"Monsieur has had created quite an atmosphere in this room," I said to him.

"French?" he asked immediately.

"Now that *I* am in it, yes, *monsieur.*" And at that I saw him begin to like me.

He wished me success and happiness with the firm in a genuine manner. And he told me to remember he was always back of me.

That is good. Because if he ever got in front of me, he would blot out my job. Never have I seen such a huge man.

He then presented me with a large and handsome book on which was written: Dress Data and Daily Comments of Our Style Adviser.

I objected at first. "My English is bad written—and the story of my life, *je vous*

Little French GIRL

By

MARCELINE d'ALROY

BENEATH OUT gowns we are different, yet they say beneath our skin we are alike!

assure, Monsieur le President—Monsieur—"

But he stopped me, smiling:

"Do not be alarmed, *madame*. It is mere part of our Policy of Efficiency."

What a mouthful of noise is that word efficiency! Already I hate it. I hear it everywhere. Yet it must be part of my policy to appear to swallow it.

Tuesday Night.

New York is a miracle.

There are such crowds of good-looking men in it.

But I wish some would wear the mustache so that they do not look so all alike.

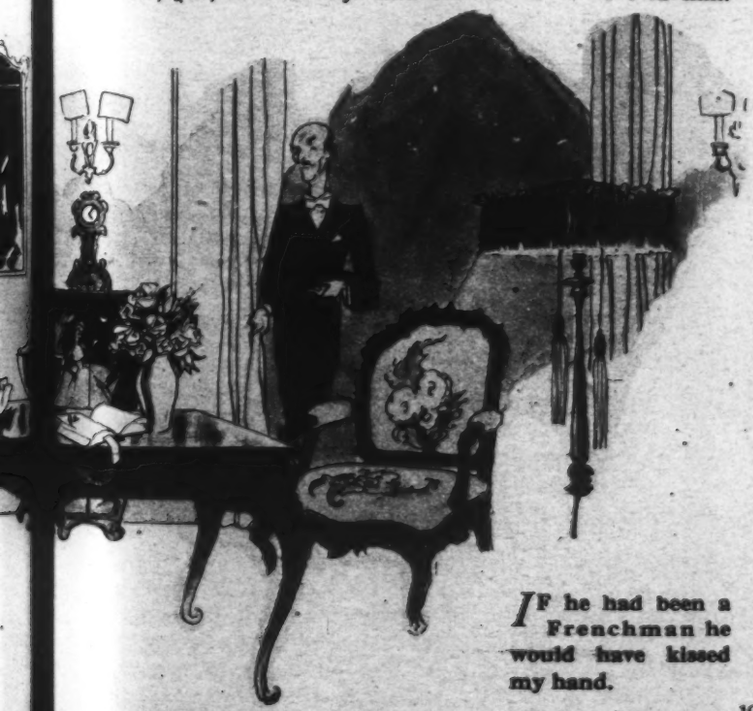
Don't they know that, sometimes, a woman likes to seek for the lips beneath a mustache in the same way as men used to look for silk ankles beneath long skirts? Now, it seems, we can get all we want without looking for it. These U. S. men are well-groomed, too.

But I had better get back to the store. I am experiencing so much there that I am afraid of forgetting something. And what is the good of things happening to a woman if she cannot remember them?

This American Department Store is wonderful! I admire greatly the skill with which the goods are displayed. But the thing that impresses me most is the girls who sell the goods behind the counters. Never have I seen so much beauty under a business roof. Never! Ah! but some are lovely, so beautiful, and of such grace that they might belong in any station of life.

Monsieur Brady looked into my office to see me today. He is the Merchandising Manager. A big, blond man with a pleasant voice and manner. The type—"typical American." Nice to women but non-flirtatious.

"Oh, yes, I write my data on the store," I told him.



IF he had been a Frenchman he would have kissed my hand.

"How do you write it—in what form, I mean?"

"Oh! I just write it. What I think."

"But that is not very efficient." He looked at me severely. "I see you have not a good system."

"Pardon me! M. Brady, but my system is in a most excellent order. Ah! what is all this talk I hear all the time in the store about systems. It is in everybody's mouth. Really, the men who run this store talk more about their systems than old maiden ladies about their operations. It surprises me."

Then he laughed. "System in a store," he said, "has nothing to do with anatomy. It is simply a matter of law and order."

"Ah! Those at the head make the laws, and those underneath carry out the orders. *Bon!* And now, since you tell me I have no system, will you not please give me a nice one for my diary?"

Very seriously then the big M. Brady said this to me:

"You must preface everything you write with *RE*, and you must be very concise."

"What does *RE* mean, and what is it—concise?

"*RE* means 'in reference to,' and concise is brief, clear and to the point," he said seriously.

"Like you, for example?"

"Yes," he said, and then seemed embarrassed. He stood up suddenly.

I held out my hand. "Thank you, M. Brady!"

"Just a moment," he said. Then he said something I did not understand about putting something over him. And he looked at me in a very funny way, and it was such a funny thing to say that I became confused.

"When in doubt always say no!" my English teacher had once advised me concerning foreign languages, so I said: "Oh, no, M. Brady—no, certainly not."

Then he shook my hand warmly, and said: "The best of luck to you, *madame*," and was quickly gone.

All right. Now I have his system I will try it.

RE the Mr. Wolfe.

Mr. Abraham Wolfe is the other half of the firm. Since he hardly spoke to me I asked if he was the silent partner

"No, but he's a silent [*Continued on page 92*]

The

IN THE rough old days when the Indians and the hide hunters were trying to drive one another from the Panhandle, and the great bison herds roamed over nearly half the state of Texas, the Plaza Paloduro stood on a low tableland near the south fork of the Canadian: half a dozen flat-topped adobe buildings visible for many miles across the grassy plain. And the largest of them was Snake Thompson's store.

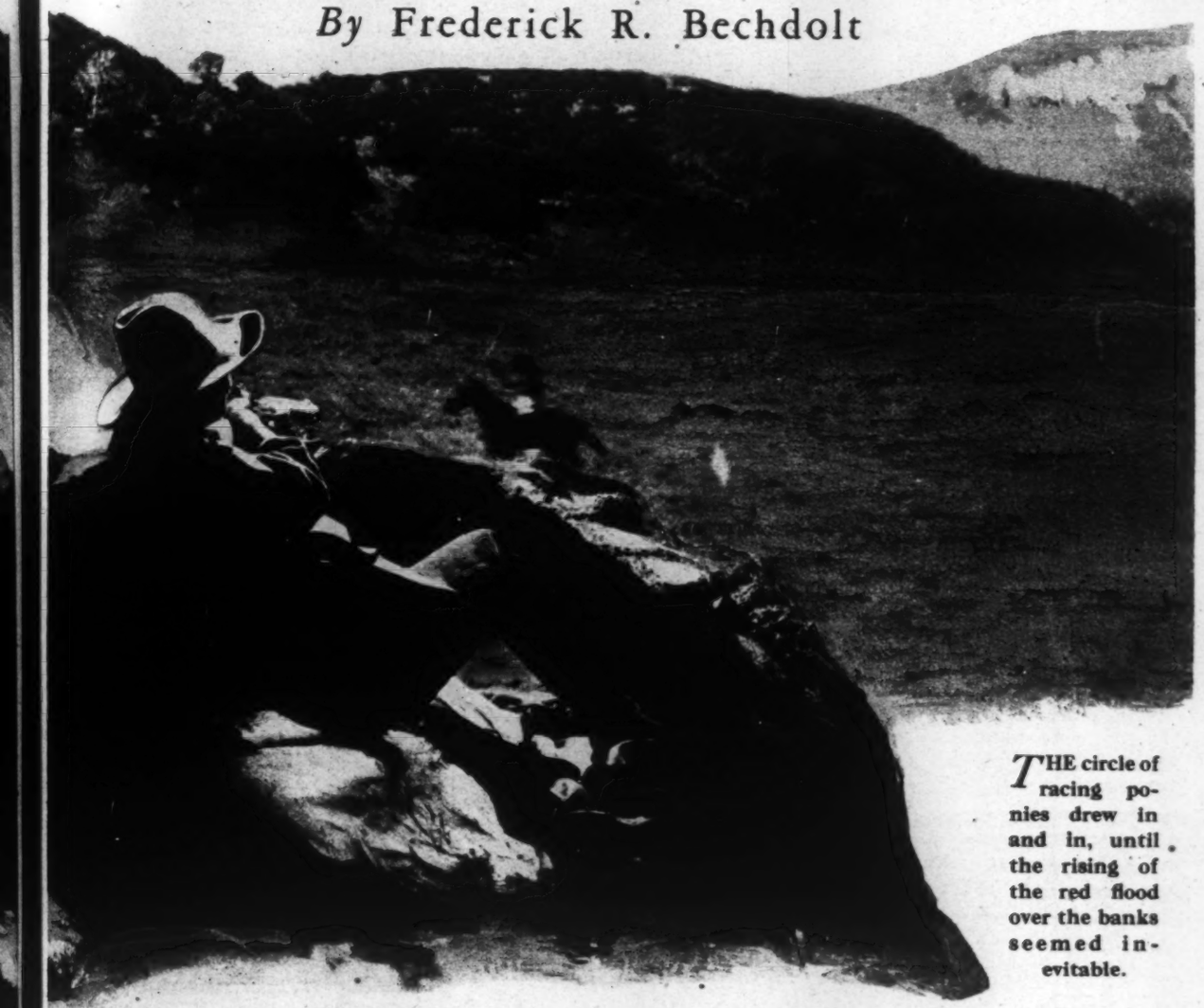
It was not much of a store at that. Outside, a pile of dried hides was forever rattling in the persistent prairie wind. Within there were sacked provisions, skinners' knives, powder, pig lead and the most virulent whiskey south of the Arkansas river. Usually the proprietor was to be found about the place, somewhat the worse for his own liquor. Sometimes his portly Mexican wife was in evidence. Also there was a chocolate-colored youth of mongrel extraction who went by the name of Pedro and slunk around in the background doing the menial work. More pleasant to look upon than any of these was the fourth figure in Snake Thompson's domestic establishment.

This was Maria—and when you speak her name, pronounce it Mar-i-a. She was Snake Thompson's niece and came from Taos where the fiery whiskey originated. It was evident that there had been a gringo hidden in some limb of her family tree—or maybe it was one of those blue-eyed Castilians who occasionally drifted up from old Mexico. For her complexion was tempered to a deep ivory tone and there was enough of patrician fineness in her features to make the animal that lurked behind it the more alluring. Her hair was black silk; her eyes were two smoky gray pools, and her cherry lips were most engagingly unmoral. What trade Snake Thompson got was due in good part to her presence, for at the Plaza Amarillo, sixty miles away, there was another store whose stock was larger and whose whiskey was not so lethal, but there was no niece from Taos to smile upon its customers.

Nature had fashioned this slip of a girl to twist all men around her little finger and she took much enjoyment in the pastime. No hunter who came to the Plaza Paloduro failed to get at least a sidelong glance from under her dark lashes, and many lingered in the thrall of her smiles. Moreover she had possession of a fundamental truth regarding the male sex. She knew that every man, no matter what his physical shortcomings, is ready to believe

LITTLE BAGGAGE

By Frederick R. Bechdolt



THE circle of racing ponies drew in and in, until the rising of the red flood over the banks seemed inevitable.

The Way of Two Men with a Maid Will Ever Be Past Understanding

he owns some hidden charm by which a pretty woman can be held against all comers; the only assurance he needs is that the woman in question tell him of his irresistibility. Having this knowledge—which had germinated within her just as the knowledge of hunting does in a kitten—she proceeded to use it for her own pleasure.

So it came that, when Tug Slaughter drove in from his camp out on the Llano Estacado with a wagon-load of dried bison hides, he would always manage to find an excuse to stay overnight at the Plaza Paloduro. And, while the skinners were waiting for his return, he would be loafing around Snake Thompson's flat-roofed house, wooing this little baggage in the firm belief that some of these days, when the great herd had passed on to northward, she was going to ride back with him to Fort Griffin and help him spend the season's earnings. He was a burly young Texan, with a disordered dark forelock hanging down over his reckless black eyes, and an engaging rowdyish smile—equally impetuous when it came to fighting or to frolic or to making love.

Of another sort was Morg Williams who had come down across the dead-line at the Arkansas river from Dodge that same spring. A tall, spare man with cold gray eyes and a drooping blond moustache, slow of speech and deadly sure of action, with a headboard or two to his credit in the old boothill at Abilene where he had learned the art of shooting from the hip. He was well along in his thirties and the country had used him hard, but he was quite certain that Maria was going to do his cooking and begin rearing a family for him in the cabin which he planned to build next autumn on the banks of the Republican. In the serenity of this belief he used to bask, the while he listened to the liquid murmur of her voice in the evenings by Snake Thompson's house. Then in the dawn he would harness up his team and drive out on the Staked Plains to his conical lodge of buffalo hides, where his partner and the skinners were wondering what had happened to him.

So this went on, all spring and into the early summer; and when either of these two lovers had occasion for jealousy, which was just about as often as any other hunter happened into the Plaza Paloduro, his turbulence was quieted by the lithe-figured Maria, who had, as was explained, the infallible remedy for cases like theirs. Up to

Drawing by Russell Patterson

"Indians! Comanches!" His voice was flat with weariness.

the middle of June luck so ordered it that the pair had not driven into the plaza at the same time. Then luck took a turn.

It was an evening late in the month of June. A party of swarthy lancers from Puerta de Luna on their annual meat hunt had dropped into the little settlement, and one of them was a third cousin of Snake Thompson's wife. So she was giving a *baille* and five or six hide hunters, who had got wind of this social function, were among the self-invited guests. The chocolate-colored Pedro was sitting on the earthen floor manipulating a battered accordion; the dark-skinned riders from the Pecos and the sunburned Americans were taking turns at whirling the fat Mexican *señoras* about the low-ceilinged room. And Morg Williams was monopolizing Maria.

The evening was still young, so young that there had as yet not been a single fight. Pedro was pulling slow waltz music from the folds of the accordion. The placid *señoras* were gliding around in the arms of their partners with a light-footedness which seemed to belie their tonnage. Morg Williams was enjoying his fourth dance with Maria; looking down into those smoky gray eyes; feeling the soft seduction of her smile. Just then Tug Slaughter appeared in the doorway.

Pure chance had brought him here tonight; he had known nothing of the *baille*. Now he stood upon the threshold watching Maria and her lean suitor. And he would have been blind indeed if he had not found food for jealousy in what he saw. The dance went on and on. It seemed to Tug Slaughter like an eternity before the music stopped. Then, for the first time, Morg Williams saw him standing in the doorway and Maria uttered a little cry as she beheld the two men looking into each other's eyes. The depth of the thrall in which this little baggage held both of them is worthy of passing comment; for when the newcomer had beckoned and his older rival had followed him outside, the former said:

"Look here, yo' leave my girl alone." To which Morg Williams made reply, ignoring the cry of dismay which Maria had uttered at the appearance of the other, and which would seem to reveal her guilt:

"What do you mean your girl? You keep away from this here house, or else I'll have to kill you."

It was an age, much like the mediaeval days, of challenge and of single combat to the death. And the pair who stood in the twilight of the dusty little plaza, looking their hate into each other's eyes, were both made of the stuff by which such eras are rendered possible. So they continued to regard each other narrowly, quite oblivious of a rider who was spurring his jaded horse through the falling dusk toward the spot where they were standing. And Tug Slaughter said hotly:

"Like hell yo' will. Why don't yo' start in now, ef that's the way yo' feel about it?"

If his antagonist had been of the same fervent temperament as he, this story might have ended here and been no tale at all. But he was one of those who grow colder with the imminence of action; and so he merely held his right arm limber for a quick dart of the hand to the revolver butt beside his thigh in case necessity should arise; and the hatred in his heart made his voice like ice.

"Now is as good a time as any ef you want it. I tell you what we'll do——"

It was as far as he got. The rider had reached the plaza and the limbs of his horse were shaking under him as he uttered the shout which interrupted the arrangements.

"Indians!"

When he had called the one word at the top of his voice he flung himself from the saddle. The music stopped with a windy groan; the hunters came trooping from Snake Thompson's house to gather round the messenger. In the front rank of the audience were Tug Slaughter and Morg Williams.

"Comanches." The messenger's voice was flat with weariness. "They got my two skinners. When I rode into camp this noon, I found the both of 'em, pegged out on the sod like a pair of hides." He went on with brief details which caused the eyes of his audience to narrow. "There is two hundred of 'em, jedgin' by the signs, and they are headed for the Plaza Amarillo."

"That would be Chief Nigger Head and his war party." Old Smoky Hill Adams, who had fought Indians all the way from Fort Laramie to the Double Mountain Fork of the Brazos, was the speaker. "They been dodgin' the cavalry all spring. The chances is, they'll camp som'ers along the river bottom tonight, and they'll make their raid at sunup. Somebody has got to fetch word to the Plaza Amarillo."

Tug Slaughter stepped forward.

"Gimme a good hoss," he said. "I'll go."

Smoky Hill Adams stroked his white beard.

"One man might be able to slip by them Comanches in the night ef he was lucky. Ef there was two, the chances of one a gettin' through would be better."

"I know that end of the country," Morg Williams said. "I'll go."

So it was settled, and within the half hour the pair rode forth from the Plaza Paloduro, swathed round by cartridge belts, holding their long-barreled fifty caliber Sharp's rifles across their saddle-bows. Maria stood in the doorway of Snake Thompson's house watching their departure, but neither man turned to look back at her.

THE long slow twilight deepened to velvety blue darkness. The surface of the plain merged with the night. It was as if they were riding across a sea, save for the sound of the horses' hoofs upon the sod. The fragrant night wind bathed their faces. The stars grew larger overhead. Morg Williams pointed to one hanging low in the sky, straight before them.

"That there," said he, "is where we head fer, the next

forty miles; then swing due north and come down the breaks to the Plaza Amarillo."

So through the hours they rode. Now and again one of them spoke to his horse. Otherwise they were silent. Until the gloom which settles thick upon the earth before the coming of the dawn was enwrapping them and Morg Williams said:

"We turn north here."

"'Pears like we're liable to make it," Tug Slaughter drawled.

But fate which arranges the affairs of red warriors and white had been carrying out some plans of its own during these past eight hours. And, on the evening before, it so happened that a porcupine had taken it into its head to go lumbering across the path of the Comanche war party just as they were about to make their camp down in the river bottom. Whereat the medicine man, who heard the voices of the tribal gods in the wind and read their wishes in the behavior of Nature's smallest creatures, had declared that calamity threatened the expedition if they continued by this route. So the warriors had gone forth upon the tableland to spend the night in solemn ritual, painting their naked bodies with strange patterns of red and yellow. And now they were traveling northward across the plain in the darkness, holding their ponies to an easy gait, until the time should come for them to sweep down upon the hamlet. So they came on, unconscious of the two white men ahead of them.

The shadows lifted slowly from the sleeping earth. The light crept upward across the sky's rim. Small objects near at hand revealed themselves. The broken line where the bluffs descended toward the river bottom was becoming more and more distinct. The stars blinked out. The dawn marched forward with increasing swiftness.

"What the hell," Tug Slaughter asked his horse, "is ailin' yo'?" He glanced behind and answered his own question with a shout.

"Here they come!"

It seemed as if the surface of the plain back there had yielded from itself a long blurred line of moving forms. They stood out, indistinct and small with distance, against the pallid sky. The two men drove in their spurs. The weary horses leaped into a run.

For some time there was no sound save the dull rattle of the hoofs. The sky was glowing in the east. The broken line of bluffs was showing sharp against the heavens in the north. Morg Williams leaned far forward in his saddle and his long arm shot out.

"Head fer that there round butte," he cried. "It is our only bet."

The knoll to which he pointed was a mile and more away, ahead and to their left. It stood out from the plain, alone, perhaps a hundred feet in height. They wheeled their horses into the new course and the venomous shrill war yell came down the wind. They glanced behind. The line of the Comanches was no longer blurred; the forms of the riders had grown much larger; here and there among them the streamers of a war-bonnet showed tossing against the sky. And as they looked the pursuers spread out and split into two parties.

So, while the sun sent its first pink streamers across the horizon, the two of them drove in their bloody spurs; and the horses labored into the last lap of the race, with the main body of the savages whooping on behind and fifty eager warriors quirting their fleet-footed little ponies in a wide semicircle, to intercept them from their goal. Morg Williams' voice came through the thunder of the hoofs:

"They's a buffalo wallow at the top. Ef we can make it——"

The rattle of a score of rifles interrupted him. The jaded horses sobbed like two grief-stricken women. The leaden slugs snarled overhead. The drumming of the hoofs was growing louder where the fifty riders were closing in off to their left. They could see the short tufts of buffalo grass at the base of the knoll ahead of them.

The interval of plain was level as a floor. They crossed it with the forefront of the [*Continued on page 99*]

One night to Maria's dismay both lovers appeared at the same time at the Plaza.

The dare-devil clinging to the strut was Hope Loring, the wild daughter of a man's man.

By
A. A.
CAFFREY

No

A Little Imagination

LOUD cars are not uncommon on Hollywood Boulevard. And when they make louder cars you'll still find them on that thoroughfare. So, nowadays, when something really stopping in the line of blatant equipage causes heads to turn on that street of missing meals it must be different.

I was standing in front of the Western Union office—all Hollywood and somebody else's wife comes to the Western Union at least once a day to wire East for money—because I like to be where the crowds are thickest. Glutting the sidewalk were those who were either waiting for the return wire or could not decide how much to ask for this time, or else—from whom. Dynamiting in from the west, and laying a lethal smoke-screen of gas fumes, a chrome-yellow roadster poured itself to a conspicuous stop at the curb. A young girl disembarked, and, with the certainty of one who knows her way, she floated through the door into the realm of wishing wires.

The girl was none other than Hope Loring, old man Loring's only daughter. And old man Loring is old R. S. —Rough Stuff—Loring, builder of railroads, aqueducts and empires. "The wild daughter of a man's man," I was thinking. "He's made the Southwest what it is, and now, in this eighteen-year-old flapper . . . Blah!"

My attention reverted to the chrome-yellow chariot and there, behind the wheel and goosing the throttle, idly and noisily, reposed my good friend "Loop" Murry, owner of Murry's Flying Circus. He saw me at about the same time.

"Looks as though all your ships came in at once, Loop."

"No. This boat belongs to the sweet woman; I'm as usual—clean and flat."

"I suppose you know who the sweet woman is don't you, Loop—old R. S. Loring's—and jail-bait."

"That's all jake," he assured me. "The kid's my student; I'm teaching her how to fly, and, take it from me, Mace, the kid's there. She handled a plane in seven hours; now I'm showing her some acrobatics; then I'll turn her loose; all within ten air-hours. Game! She's Gunga Din's half-sister when it comes to having no use for fear."

Right there I got an idea how Loop's mighty brain was working. Aviation, to Loop, meant stunt stuff. Stunt stuff and Hollywood and the daughter of old Loring—total: money in the bank for one Loop Murry.

"And how about wing-walking and parachute jumping and plane-change stuff," I asked, "is she taking a course in that too?"

"She's just a student, Mace." He avoided the issue. "Say, she won't get an answer to this wire until tonight. How about a few frog skins till then?" Loop, except for the danger of him dying intestate, has always been a good risk; I let him have it.

"You'll always find me hanging round Bugs' place when I'm not out at the hangar," he said as he and Hope opened-it-up and blasted down the boulevard.

The "Bugs" referred to was young Bugs Tedder who formerly acted in the capacity of stunt-man for the Loop Murry outfit. Bugs had seen the error of his way, given

Bill Sutter was steadily closing the gap, with the girl reaching for the oncoming rope ladder.

BRAINS

Is a Dangerous Thing

up the stunt stuff and turned to the less deadly art of aerial photography. He had an office in the Hill Building and was going fine.

After that, during several weeks, I didn't see Loop except in a passing way. The chrome-yellow bus with its three extra shoes and bank of stop and parking-lights was always going some place, and with Loop at the wheel. Now and then, in the newspapers, I noticed mild mention of Miss Hope Loring's progress in flying. Behind that mild mention, I could see the publicity building of the mighty Loop.

Trying to get away from aviation and into something new, I had been avoiding the flying fields and the cult in general. But, on the day that Bugs Tedder gave me a ring, and asked me if I'd take a flying job for the afternoon, I was beginning to weaken.

"Maybe," I answered. "What's the job?"

"I want you to fly a camera plane for me," Bugs went on. "I'm shooting some stunt stuff this afternoon over Hollywood . . ."

"Stunt stuff!—Count me out; I'm . . ."

"You can't afford to be proud and haughty when there's ten dollars in it for you," Bugs came back; and he was right.

"Now it's this way," Bugs continued. "Loop just called me up from the Long Beach field. He's got two planes due over Hollywood at noon. He's going to pull something fast and wants me to be on hand to get the pictures for the papers; so if you'll take it on, I'll pick you up and we'll run out to Clover. It's twelve-thirty now."

"I'll be waiting for you." Ten dollars!—that's money.

Clover Field, on the western edge of Los Angeles, is the original nut-factory for the making of Hollywood's air thrillers. More cameras are cranked there than on any other air field in the uncivilized world. The boys, when we arrived, had a plane ready for us. After a few minutes of adjusting this and that, with Bugs and his camera in the front cockpit, I took off.

It was well after one-thirty before we got under way, but it is less than ten air-minutes from Clover to Hollywood, so we had nothing to worry about. As we turned east and started for that city, off to the south I found Loop and the other plane coming up from Long Beach. They were flying at an altitude of about five thousand feet. I crowded my motor and climbed for that level too. Before I had won that much ceiling, Hollywood was under me. The other two planes, now a thousand feet above, were within a few miles of the destination. The sky was high and clear; the city, nearly a mile below, gleamed white in the strong afternoon sunlight.

In getting together, the three planes droned on into the east. Five minutes later, a half dozen miles beyond the city, we came to the same level and abreast. Then all three winged-over and, heading into the steady west wind, cut back for Hollywood and toward the Pacific, a dozen or fifteen miles beyond.

In that location all stunt stuff is performed flying into the steady blow of the almost constant west wind. Since

we were carrying the camera, we bore off to the north. Also gained a few feet above the other two. Then, on a company front of three, the planes milled together, crowded in closely, and moved at the same speed and as one. The motors throbbed beat for beat. This air-work is pretty, but—work.

I said that Bugs had quit stunt stuff. He has. But his camera work seems to take the thing up where his nonsense stopped; and from there carry on into the realm of higher dare-deviltry. When he takes aerial pictures he does so from the wing. In this way he avoids the always possible interference caused by struts, wires and surfaces coming into focus.

"I see it's going to be a ladder change," Bugs shouted as he scrambled from his cockpit and, camera in hand, started out along my lower left wing.

From wire to wire, and strut to strut, he worked his dangerous way. At the outer front strut, he slid to a sitting position; facing out and toward the other ships. With one leg wrapped around it, he hugged the front strut for support. Looking beyond Bugs I could see the nearest plane—it was being flown by Bill Sutter; and he was alone, feeding out a rope ladder.

Bugs had formerly been a stunt-man; he knew how to swing from one plane to another in mid-air.

A ladder change is something that came in shortly after the war. In making this change from plane to plane, the dare-devil choosing to do the stunt takes his stand upon the far, outer end of a top wing. There he half faces to the rear and waits. Another plane, dragging a fifteen-foot rope ladder from its landing gear, comes up from the rear and just about fifteen feet above. When the dangling ladder comes within reach of the dare-devil on the top wing, said dare-devil takes two handsful of that ladder, and that's that. Simple . . . Simply insane.

Loop, in the more distant plane, was crowding ahead; getting out front. At the same time, I noticed that his dare-devil had left the front cockpit and was moving out along the lower right wing. When the wing-walker reached the inner front strut, there was a moment's hesitation, and at that minute my brave, fluttering heart missed a few shots too. The hesitating dare-devil was Hope Loring. She looked back at Loop. He waved her on to the outer strut—impatiently; in her first fright she had started to climb the inner one.

In order that a dare-devil might reach his, her or its position on the upper wing, he, she or it must climb the outer front strut, from the lower to the upper wing. This climb, so they say—and I'm willing to believe—takes all one has of nerve. When the climb is accomplished, the dare-devil's hands are upon the cabane-strut assembly. This assembly is a wing-tip bracing tangle of struts, spreader-bar and six wires. The struts stand some fifteen or eighteen inches above the top of the wing. Entwining the legs among and around these struts and wires, the dare-devil can take a standing position. His hands are free.

As I sat there thinking nice things about Loop, I watched Hope overcome her fright, climb the strut and reach a faltering stand atop the wing. "Never let 'em quit," is what Loop and his ilk preach. "Never let 'em turn back, or they're done."

So now we were all lined up. Loop, with Hope in position, was flying out front. Some fifty feet to the rear, slightly above and with his ladder dragging, came Bill Sutter, flying steadily and closing the gap. Off to the north, at less than a hundred-foot distance, I paralleled the flight of the other two. On my wing Bugs was ready. And the heart of Hollywood was a mile below.

Air conditions were fine. Now and then, an air bump bounced or lowered the planes, but the wave motion was more or less even. Not choppy nor treacherous. The actual flying of the stunt was going to be easy.

The first time that Hope reached back for the oncoming rope ladder, Bill Sutter's guess had not been good. For a minute, reaching out and out, the girl seemed to forget where she was. I thought she was going to step along the wing after it; my blood ran cold, and . . . The ladder swept past. She stooped and steadied herself on the cabane-strut, and Bill Sutter shot full-throttle to his motor, turned around in a madly-flown bank, then came up for another try.

This time, Bill put the ladder right in her arms. Hope reached out and took it in both hands, but at the same second she noticed for the first time that Bill's propeller was howling not more than four feet above her head. In that second, terror-stricken by the proximity of the whirling blades, she became panicky. She reached again for her hold on the cabanes and, clinging to everything within reach, lay flat on the wing. As she went down, she had failed to turn loose the ladder. Instead, she had drawn the slack of the ropes through the wires of the cabane assembly. We three pilots and one good photographer knew we had something big on hand: two planes tied together in flight. That's not so good! Fact is, without much intensive guessing, it would be hard to think of anything worse.

Well, Hope was out of the picture. We couldn't count on her for a thing; if, in the next few minutes, she didn't faint and roll back into Hollywood we'd consider ourselves lucky. Loop had over-enthused; there are girls who can outdo men in daring, but the daughter of old "R. S." was not one. The daughter of old "R. S.," had she only known it, had too many generations of brains behind her. Dare-devils, you'll notice, are never bristling with brains.

Mile after mile, Loop and Bill Sutter flew as one and tried to ease the ladder from its entanglement. Hope never moved. The pilots, no doubt thinking that the ropes were just lightly caught, air-worked back and forth; eased sidewise, up and down; then tried taking a strain on the ladder. When they did that, Loop's plane nearly capsized. And Hope, noticing the sudden movement, clawed wildly for more handholds.

Bugs had shot plate after plate. From his point of view, this was great stuff. Finally, working his way back to the fusilage, he dropped the camera into his seat and spoke to me:

"Fly around and put me on Loop's bottom left wing. I'll have to untangle this mess. Damn these fair maidens!"

It was the only solution as much as I disliked any participation in this circus business. I dropped down and

ahead to a position in front of and to the left of the trouble. Bugs, at the same time, was working his way along my lower right wing on his journey to a stand atop our right upper surface. By the time I had reached the desired flying position, Bugs was set.

I was just a few feet lower than Loop's approaching left lower wing. Loop, with his hands full elsewhere, could give me little aid in easing the planes together. I throttled and flew my right panels into line. Slowly the oncoming wing closed the distance; Bugs reached back; a few seconds of suspense; then an air bump or two with slow, waving rebound, and the kid took a double handful of Loop's outer front strut and he was aboard. It's all so easy when you really know how—and don't think too much.

With the speed of a flying-trapeze performer, Bugs flashed along the lower left wing, scrambled over the cockpit, then out on the right panel. From there he wished, it was so fast, his way to the upper surface and in less than half a split second, it seemed to me, was at Hope's side.

Loop and an ultra-dizzy blond were coming out of the Christy.

Right there another problem presented itself. As the planes were then flying, Bill Sutter's was helping to support the double weight on the right wing of Loop's. With the planes cut apart, and the girl helpless, what would happen? Could Loop manage to continue flying; or would the two hundred and some odd pounds drag that wing down and put his plane out of control? We all knew enough about wing balance to know that we were still up against it. But young Bugs solved the problem.

I watched him half kick the prostrate Hope to a position nearer to the body of the plane. In this new position, she was pinned tightly under the slanting brace-wires leading to the cabane-struts. If she was completely unconscious, it wasn't likely that the wind could dislodge her from there.

"Not so bad," I was musing. "The boy actually thinks."

The next move stopped me. It looked like desertion, or cowardice before the enemy.

Taking hold of the ladder with his left hand, Bugs strained and worked it free with his right. But when the planes jerked apart Bugs went with the ladder, dangling and wind blown at its end. Loop flew as before, straight into the west. And then, for the first time, I noticed that we were well out over the Pacific.

I don't know what kind of a code these nuts use but they seem to understand each other without word-of-mouth or other motion. With the girl's hundred pounds of weight on his upper wing, Loop, I believe, might have made a safe landing. But if the girl were mine I wouldn't want to see him try it. Well, it wasn't going to be done that way.

With Bugs still dangling on the ladder, Bill Sutter flew round Loop, out front, and to a position above the end of Loop's left upper wing. The planes swapped motor-beat for motor-beat; Bill mushed down, stretched a leg—then stretched the other . . . And he was back on Loop's plane. Oh, the thing's parlor stuff when the right boys are on the job.

Monkey-like, Bugs dropped to the lower wing's tip. There, stretching out flat, he remained. His weight, at the extreme end, counterbalanced that of Hope where she still reposed.

Then all three planes flew a turn and started back for Clover Field. Time and miles travel fast when your attention is on something far more important than either time or miles. I'm not sure of the distance, but we must have flown fifteen miles out to sea before the job was done.

The shoreline was a very indefinite thing in the summer haze. But, from my anxious seat, a more indefinite thing was the amount of gasoline in our tanks. These owners of stunt machines run their planes strictly on "hope" gasoline: hope there's enough to get back to the home field. They seldom think of buying a supply.

Bill Sutter must have been hoping too. As soon as he had delivered Bugs on Loop's plane, I saw him throttle low and start on a long glide shoreward. That was when the three had swung around. Bill just did make shore. His motor stopped a few minutes later and we watched him stretch a glide into a safe landing on the beach near Venice.

Long of face, Loop, flying at my side, was also on the anxious seat. From Long Beach to Hollywood to the Pacific is a long [*Continued on page 118*]

A HUSBAND'S

"Yet I, this little while, ere I go hence,
Love very lightly now, in self-defense."
—LAURENCE HOPE

CRESS and Louise Baring had been married for eight years—and they were still lovers. Every other husband and wife in Sedgwick Manor looked upon the happiness of the Barings, and either sighed or laughed. Those who laughed did so out of the natural embarrassment that afflicts the seasoned married when the unreserved follies of lovers stalk about too openly before them. The sighs came from wives who wondered why their husbands had lost the attentiveness that marked Cress Baring's behavior toward his wife.

Louise was not particularly popular with the women of the Manor. She had a disconcerting habit of interrupting an angry wife's complaint about a thoughtless or moody husband with some conspicuously happy confidence of her own, dropping hints of such complete joy that the seeker for a sympathetic ear was left baffled and irritated.

Intimate confidences of the sort nearly every woman is eager to impart at some time or another were intolerable to Louise. Her friends were struck to silence by her intense morality. She became stiffly reticent and coldly disinterested when conversation was led into a discussion of marital philandering. She believed that erring husbands and wives were fundamentally bad. Her synonym for sex was wedlock. Divorce was anathema.

The man who marries a code like that of Louise has, of course, a lot to live up to. Cress Baring's devotion to the code and to his wife might have been less noticeable had she called less attention to it. His shy chivalrous manner with all women made him very attractive to them. They saw in him the perfect lover. That he was by the same token a perfect husband made of him both paragon and paradox. Louise was a wife to be envied and she knew it—rather arrogantly. Even her courtship had been unusually beautiful; a thing of moonlight and roses, long tramps through the woods, swift tennis, good music, good books. It had had no dim corners, no languorous hidden amorousness. It had been what certain kinds of minds call wholesome. The same quality had carried over into her married life. The arrival of her two boys had not disturbed it.

It was during their eighth summer together that Louise broke one of her rules of wifely conduct. She had always denounced the selfishness of wives who left their husbands during the summer months. Year after year Cress had urged her to close the house and take the children away; but she had stuck firmly to her rule. How could she enjoy the cool of the seashore while he lived haphazardly alone and worked in the hot city? This summer, however, the intense heat had so enervated her that she was convinced of her need for a change. Even the boys drooped. A providential invitation from her friend, Eleanor Delevan, to spend a month at her cottage by the sea strengthened Louise's feeling that she must get away for a while or be genuinely ill.

Cress was delighted when she showed him Eleanor's letter. He urged her to accept.

"But you, darling," she protested, winding her arms about his neck, "you'll miss us so much. It will be deadly for you. This is the first time we've ever been separated since we were married."

"It's time I knew something of what other men have to put up with, dearest," said Cress. "You've spoiled me. And I'll appreciate you more than ever when you get back. So close up the house and run along."

"But what will you do if I close the house?" she asked, worriedly.

"I can stay in town and avoid the trip out here every night. I couldn't abide the place without you and the boys in it, dear. George Andrews," Cress went on reassuringly, "is going to Europe and I know he'll let me have his apartment. It's big and cool and very comfortable."

Louise looked at him, faintly startled.

"A bachelor's apartment?" she questioned.

Cress laughed happily and took her in his arms.

"It won't be—with a married man in it," he said.

By ELIZABETH TROY

SPOTS —like a Leopard's Can't Be Changed

Louise went tearfully, reluctantly, at the end of the week. Cress was quietly helpful with her luggage and with the two little boys. He put them into their chairs, lingered attentively, kissed them all fervently once again and dashed off the moving train. Louise's tear-dimmed eyes followed his tall figure adoringly. Unconsciously she looked about at the other passengers to see if they had noticed her husband's tender farewell. They must envy her if they had observed. She was a beloved wife, one of the chosen, proud, secure.

She settled down in her seat dreamily and opened a magazine. But after a moment Cress's brown good-looking face, with his adoring brown eyes, came between her and the printed page. She laughed softly to herself. Anyway, the stories in the magazine dealt with husbands and wives who had problems; with characters stupidly incapable of lasting love. She laid the tiresome book aside. It could not interest her. Her household gods were faithful and serene.

When the train pulled into the station of Saltaire, Eleanor Delevan, looking charmingly tanned and cool, stood waiting for her. Louise and Eleanor had been classmates at college. They had held their friendship together through a fitful correspondence, but they had not seen each other for six years. Each concealed admirably her recognition of notable changes in the other. Louise was struck by the smooth brittle shell of sophisticated poise that encased the once diffident Eleanor. Eleanor felt a vague shock of irritation as her quick intuitive eye searched Louise's expression of placid abstracted contentment for some trace of the old eager intelligence that had so attracted her at college. Life must have been very soft for her, reasoned Eleanor swiftly as she kept up an amiable chatter. In the days that followed, passed between the country club and the beach, she grew increasingly puzzled by the curiously blank look in Louise's deep blue eyes. Something of a child's innocence, of a child's candid ignorance, shone from them. Eleanor could not reconcile the the look with eight years of married life.

After a week of her guest's companionship, the mystery of that look cleared up to Eleanor's complete satisfaction. Louise was fatuously in

ELEANOR was puzzled by the innocent look in Louise's eyes. She could not reconcile it with eight years of marriage.

love with her husband. Being in love had become a fixed unchanging condition. And to Eleanor's utter horror, Louise began to bore her. When bored, Eleanor was irritable. She seemed unable to control a faint malice toward Louise that finally caused her husband to remonstrate with her.

"Look here," he said, good-naturedly, "better sheathe the feline claws a bit. Your fair little school friend is still reading her primer. Let her alone. She'll learn the advanced stuff soon enough."

"But, Bill," pleaded Mrs. Delevan, peevishly, "she's so pitifully stupid about everything. She thinks the world is spotless town and that marriage is the brightest, cleanest spot in it."

Bill, preparing for bed, jerked off his collar and threw it accurately onto his bureau.

"Well," he asked, "isn't it?"

Eleanor smiled up at him, wryly.

"Is it, old dear? Now I ask you, is it?"

Bill flushed.

"Well, as to that . . . Look here, we've got over that little flurry of mine, haven't we, Nell? Don't we know each other a lot better since we—I stepped out a bit?"

Eleanor nodded.

"Sure," she said, yawning. "I suppose we do. But what I'm getting at is about Louise. She's tragic. She's too darned happy. You can't get away with that sort of thing. The gods won't let you."

"Oh, for the Lord's sake, Nell, if there's a woman in the world with illusions after eight years with a man, let her have 'em. Forget it."

As for Louise, she decided that Eleanor and her group of gay friends were over-sophisticated. Rather fast. She was not unaccustomed to their sort. Many of her own friends said and did much the same sort of thing, but they seemed extremely mild by contrast with this crowd. She did not hesitate to drink the ubiquitous Scotch highball and synthetic cocktail at their parties, but she never permitted herself to arrive at the stage where she was possessed, as they seemed to be, of a desire to kiss or be kissed by some one else's husband.

Ted Ormond, a big blond chap with sentimental blue eyes, disgusted her immeasurably with his persistence. He confided to her one night that, though married, he had no ball and chain around his ankle but for her he'd wear one. He held her too tightly when they danced; several times she was aware of his face against her hair; once he brushed her cheek with his lips. She was furious and the sudden stiffening of her body drew a brief insincere apology from him.

When she gave Eleanor an account of Ormond's behavior, Eleanor laughed.

"Ted doesn't mean any harm, my dear," she said. "He rather fancies himself. Thinks he's irresistible, especially to the cold unresponsive type like you."

Louise was indignant.

"He's horrid and common," she declared. "Cress would never behave like that. Never."

"Cress, my dear girl, has either blinded you, lied to you or spoiled you," said Eleanor. "Do you really believe that he never thinks of any other woman?"

Louise's frown deepened. She did not like Cress to be brought into the conversation in this way.

"Of course," she said, shortly. "Other women mean nothing to him."

"How do you know that?" pursued Eleanor. "Has he ever said so?"

"He doesn't have to say it. I know it. He knows that I know it—instinctively."

"Don't bank on instincts. I'd rather be told myself." She laughed. "No doubt Cress, like a lot of other men, thinks that if he told you the real truth about his impulses you'd either die or divorce him. And in that, Louise, lies the failure of marriage."

"In what?" asked Louise, coldly.

"In women being unable to hear the truth about their husbands," replied Eleanor. "A man ought to be able to tell his wife anything—including how he feels about women. All men at some time or another are stirred by some woman. It's just the way they're made. But wives can't understand this. They never seem to realize that marrying a man merely concentrates his desire for women on *a woman*. Also," pursued Eleanor, ruthlessly, "they fail to see that when a man becomes a husband he is still a man. He does not change his spots."

Louise laughed. Eleanor's cynicism was absurdly irrelevant. It merely served to turn her thoughts to Cress whom she visualized in George Andrew's apartment, lonely, bored, longing for her and the children. She wondered what he was doing to put in the weary evenings without her. He hated movies; perhaps he was doing a lot of reading. She became tenderly absorbed in her thoughts, a gentle smile playing about her lips.

Eleanor looked at her curiously, became suddenly restless.

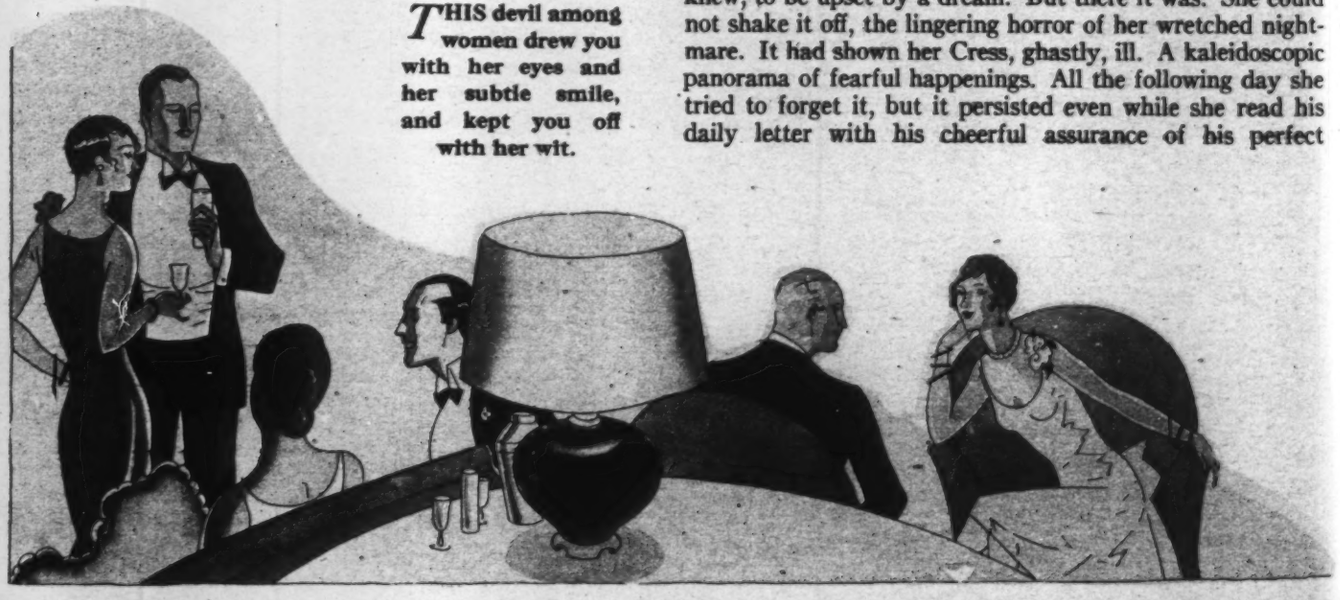
"Oh, well," she remarked to the half-attentive Louise, "you may be the one great exception. Cress is evidently as hard hit as ever; letters every day and all that sort of thing. Forget my nasty frothing at the mouth, Lou dear. Don't let it disturb you."

Louise looked up dreamily.

"Oh, that's all right, Nell. You can't disturb me. Nothing can."

In the middle of the third week, however, Louise became suddenly apprehensive. It was silly and childish of her, she knew, to be upset by a dream. But there it was. She could not shake it off, the lingering horror of her wretched nightmare. It had shown her Cress, ghastly, ill. A kaleidoscopic panorama of fearful happenings. All the following day she tried to forget it, but it persisted even while she read his daily letter with his cheerful assurance of his perfect

THIS devil among women drew you with her eyes and her subtle smile, and kept you off with her wit.



health. Her imagination, vividly quickened by her dream, convinced her that something was stalking between the lines, something that hinted vaguely of danger. Cress was either ill or troubled, and was keeping it from her.

Louise was not ordinarily a creature of impulse, but when an impulse came it came too forcibly to be denied. She decided abruptly to go to the city and reassure herself.

Self-consciously she told Eleanor, who to her relief and surprise was sympathetic.

"You won't rest until you've seen for yourself," she advised. "Run up to New York for the night. Leave the children here—they won't bother me a bit—and then you can come back and finish your visit with a clear conscience."

Louise arrived in New York at about ten-thirty that night. On the train she had wavered nervously between the chill conviction that everything was all wrong with Cress and the sudden sensible certainty that everything was all right. An hysterical anticipation possessed her as she was whirled through the maze of traffic in a taxicab to George Andrews' apartment. She comforted herself with the thought of Cress's joyous surprise; she closed her eyes, feeling Cress's arms about her, hearing in her ears the breathless tumble of loving words.

She could not keep a happy tremor out of her voice as she asked the uniformed switchboard boy if Mr. Baring was in.

"Who'll I say, ma'am?" he asked.

"I'm Mrs. Baring," she said, "but don't tell him who it is. I want to surprise him."

The boy allowed his full round eyes an instantaneous flutter as he put the plug in. The switchboard buzzed, but there was no answer from Andrews' apartment.

"Don't think he's in. I seen him go out early." He rose. "I have the key though. You can go right up."

Louise, disappointed, took the key.

"What'll I say when he comes in, ma'am?" he asked grinning.

Louise considered.

"Tell him some one is waiting to see him. But be sure you don't tell him who it is."

She opened the door of George Andrews' apartment with an unaccountable sensation of guilt. But as she stepped into the immense living room she thrilled a little at the venturesomeness of going into strange rooms—a bachelor's apartment, with its intensely masculine odor, an agreeable pungent smell of tobacco, old leather, even a faint hint of brandy. She glanced about, hoping to see some belonging of Cress's to relieve the embarrassing unfamiliarity of the place, but there was nothing, and the deathly stillness palled upon her.

Only one of the many charming lamps in the room was lighted. She went about shyly turning on the others until every object in the room was visible. The room instantly became more cheery and Louise more confident. She ran her fingers lightly over the keys of the grand piano, wondering amusedly whether Cress had been playing his one and only piece, "Peter, Peter, Pumpkin Eater."

A fine tapestry covered one of the long walls, strange bacchanalian figures woven in dull soft colors. Those prints were all good—the rugs soft, beautiful—an immense amount of excellent detail everywhere. Louise was glad for Cress's sake that George Andrews' had such a nice appreciation of things. The very beauty and comfort of Cress's borrowed quarters emphasized for her the growing conviction that he was perfectly safe and well, and that her running away from her visit to see him because she had had a silly dream was merely a gesture of her own overwhelming homesickness.

She made him pour her a drink. There was a sort of vandalism about it—Louise was usually so fastidious.

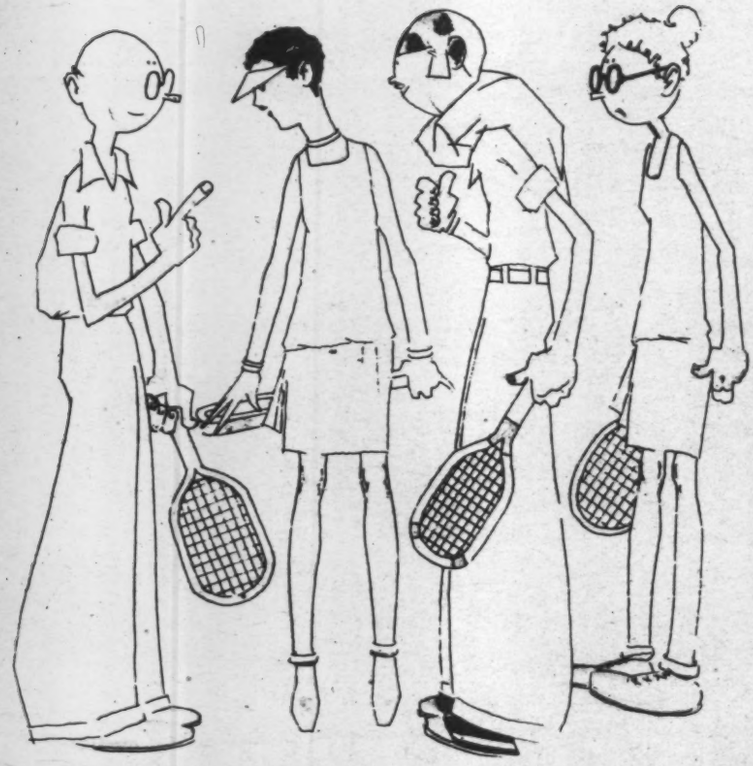
She went through the dining-room into a tiny hall, on the left of which a door opened into the one large bedroom. She went in and turned on the lights. Cress had been sleeping here! The shining slender posts of twin beds, starkly white and clean, gleamed in the light from the farthest wall of the room. A small table stood between them, bearing a siphon, a tall glass, a great box of Cress's favorite cigarets and a small reading lamp. She touched the cigarets lightly, feeling a sudden desire to smoke one because they were his. Instead [*Continued on page 102*]

By JOHN HELD, Jr.

Yo, Ho, Ho, and a

THAT McCLURE GIRL

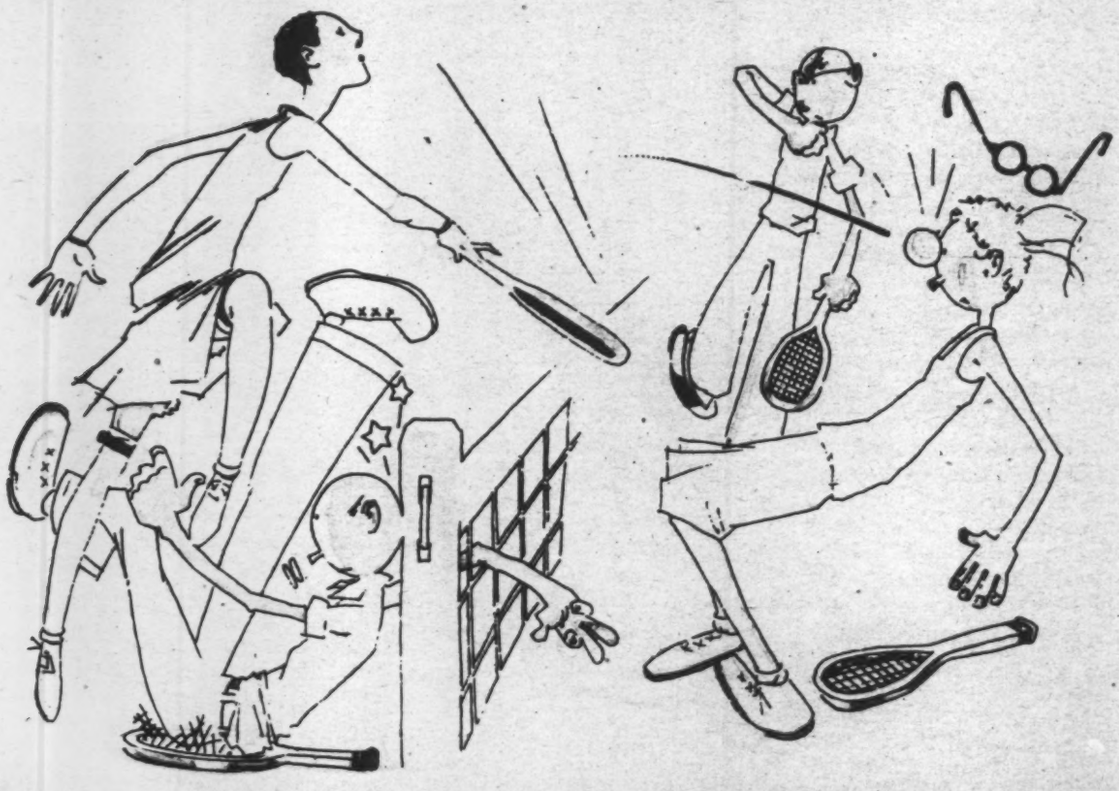
Goes In for Tennis and Yachting—and her Boss Goes In for a Swim



¶ Patsy McClure, in search of that Elusive Something not to be found in a clerk's pay envelop, gives the go-by to the penniless Freddy, the-choice-of-Dad-and-Mother, and looks around for a position with Opportunities for Advancement. The positions are microscopic but the advancement is meteoric. Patsy loses her taste for a patent-leather Casting Director and a pretzel-haired Producer, and finally intrigues the big Big Boss, Dad Drapelight himself.

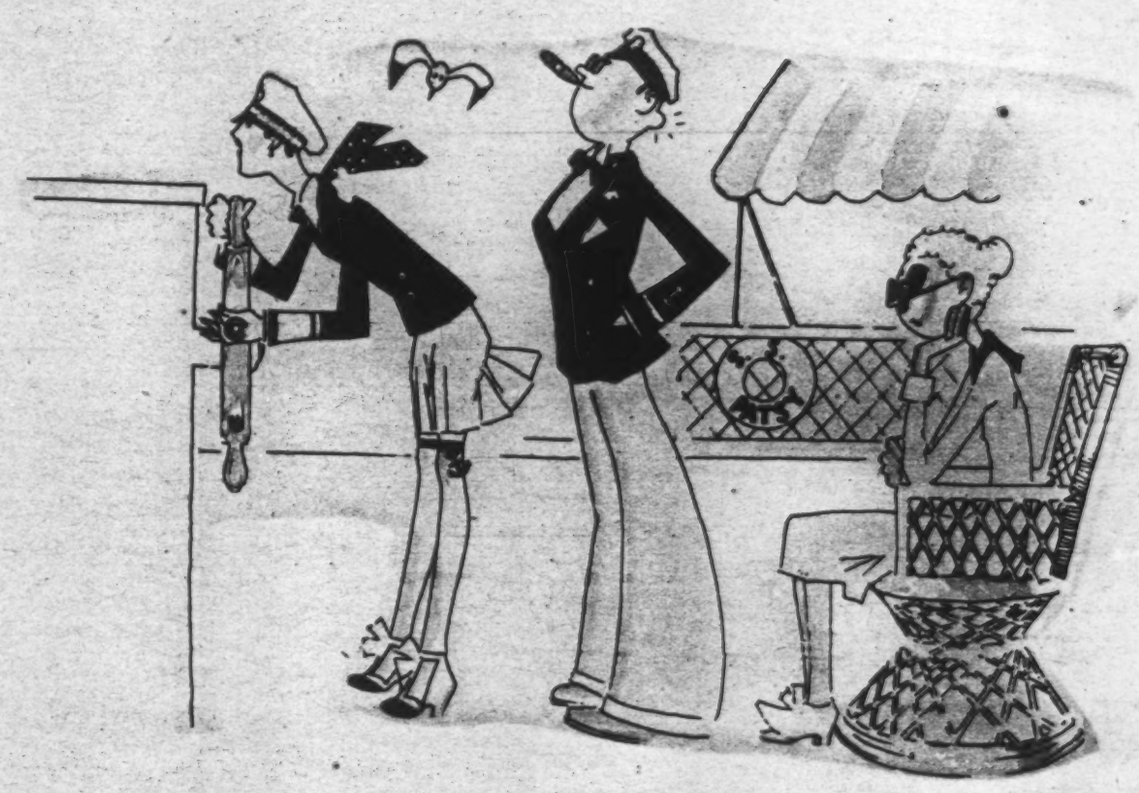
¶ Dad wanted to keep his office peaceful so he brought Pat home, where one little howitzer more or less wouldn't be noticed. Her job as companion to Dad's wife was a new one on Patsy. She had had experience in almost every line except playing G. F. to the Other Woman. But Pat pulled in her claws and landed on both feet, and it looks as if Dad were going to learn to purr.

1. *Wishing to make Patsy into a good little companion—for his wife—Dad Drapelight got up a foursome at tennis. At the Muscle Shoals Tennis and Yachting Club he got a blond shower-room shiek as partner for Ma. Before they began Dad showed Patsy the fine points of his form; but a Wimbledon sports dress made Pat sure of hers. All she wanted was to get together with the ball.*



2. *Early in the game Patsy stepped up to the net for a mean overhand that she had learned beating rugs. Dad had planned such a stroke himself. And looking him over, you've got to admit that he used his head. As the ball nestled itself in Ma's left eye Patsy cried gleefully in all the tennis jargon she knew: "My advantage!" And she was right, of course.*

Bottle of Eau de Cologne!



3. *Next day Dad Drapelight thought some fresh air would be good for what ailed Ma, so he took the ladies off on his cruiser. Patsy thought it would be cute to take the wheel. She was steering straight as a marcelle waver until she met a little sailboat on a corner. Just then the bo'sun sang out, "Rocks dead ahead," and Dad hurriedly ordered, "Port" helm. . . "Oh, goody," cried Patsy—just before the crash—"you're just too dear to know I could use a little drink right now."*

(Next Month Patsy Gets a New Job)

4. *Patsy landed Dad all right, though her line had slipped badly and she had him hooked the wrong way. But she had remembered her mother's precepts and kept her powder dry; and it so kindled Dad's wrath that he bawled out Patsy—forgetting entirely to bail out the old girl, who was all wet . . . It was about this time that Ma Drapelight decided things had gone quite far enough.*

NIX on the FRAU

THERE'S one thing about janes, as Mr. Kipling says—the time you think you know them is the time you're most like to be wrong. Even after being married for over three years. Like I've been to Tillie Ann. I'm confessing that all I know is—when a frail gets a notion under her boyish bob it's harder to pry loose than a Scotchman's bankroll.

Which more-or-less philosophy is occasioned by the latest rift in our domestic felicity. Not that Tillie Ann's hard to live with. On the contrary. We're a coupla cooing doves compared to some folks in the profession. First, I'm mad about her. Second, she's got class. Third, and not so unimportant, I got all I can do running my big revue hit "Girls and Giggles." Which you most likely know is in its second year and still crowding 'em in.

Besides doing my turns in the show, with and without the frau, I'm thinking hard for some new ideas for next season's edition. So, as you can gather, my mind's hardly one of them wide open spaces, and I'm not looking for trouble. It's kind of a shock, therefore, when Till blows in one day, just after I been listening to some new songs for the coming season and says:

"Hank, I've just joined the Lew C. Stone league."

"Must be a bush league team. I never heard of it."

"Humph," she sniffs, "you never hear of anything that happens more than a block from Broadway."

"Maybe," I chance, "nothing that far off is worth hearing. But I'm game. What's the gag?"

"It means," she condescends. "I'm lending my moral support to the movement for women to keep their own names. Each member pledges herself to keep her maiden name under any and all circumstances."

"As far as your moniker goes," I observe, "ain't you always been featured as Tillie Ann Talbot? There ain't many people stops to think of you as Mrs. Hank Howard. And if they does, it don't spoil their night's rest. So go join a coupla more leagues these warm June days, if you feel like it."

"I'm happy to see you're so amenable to reason," she smirks, "for the pledge applies to my private life as well as my public appearances."

"Okay with me, old girl, if it keeps you happy. With all the publicity we been giving you as the hit of 'Girls and Giggles,' you ain't got no more 'private life' than a train announcer at Times Square during the rush hour."

"The idea," the house detective says,

Which closes the argument for the time being, Rosen wanting to see me with sketches for costumes, and dinner to be got before overture. Till gives me a real sweet I-love-you kiss, and goes off humming a tune.

So I forgot all about this guy Lew C. Stone and his funny old league until, maybe, three or four days. When Sunday comes along, I've got the new balloon-tired buzz wagon all primed for a run up to Connecticut to a shore-dinner joint. And I've got my mouth all set for real food. The weather is bright sunshine, Tillie Ann looks like the queen of the world, we take all hills on high, and I'm declaring myself in for a perfect day.

Which only goes to prove again that what you expect seldom happens, as the saying goes. The chow place is right on the water, with a dining verandah on stilts. You can almost see the fish jumping out of the water into the

"Is that you and this young lady will have to give up your rooms."

By
MAURICE MARKS

Only a hard lesson teaches a man that the Lew C. Stone League isn't a baseball team.

frying pan. I'm feeling pretty much like life's one grand encore, and the waiter's flashed a bill-of-fare that reads like an inventory of the aquarium.

"Let's start on shrimp cocktails," purrs Tillie, priming herself for a real spread, when I hear a lusty voice sing out:

"Well, Hank Howard, of all people." And in a second I'm getting a real warm pump-handle handshake from Bill Weston. A guy I ain't seen in eight or ten years. Used to play in the bill with me in the old three-a-day.

"Bill," I grins, "sit down and join us."

"Just for a minute. I'm with a party of friends over there. Spotted you the minute you came in."

"Meet the frau, Bill," I nod. "Tillie, this is Billy, the boy wonder you've heard me talk about so often."

"Indeed yes," Tillie flashes him her million-dollar smile. "Very happy to make your acquaintance."

"Same here, Mrs. Howard," grins Bill.

"Tillie Ann Talbot," she articulates sweetly. "I use my maiden name."

"Oh, you're a Lew C. Stoner," Bill laughs. While I blush and try to swallow my tongue.

"Absolutely!" Tillie is most polite.

"And old boy Hank is for it too, I presume?" Bill shoots me a wink. I can't answer. If I look as foolish as I feel, some one ought to hand me a dunce cap. But Tillie's right on the trigger.

"Hank is quite in accord with my views," she purrs prettily. "He is thoroughly emancipated from all prejudices."

I don't know if I told you, but Tillie Ann is some slinger of the King's English. When she wants to, which is most of the time, she can spill as pretty a line of doofangle dialogue as ever hopped out of a best seller. Which, for once, is a life-saver, because I'm not saying more than exclamation points. In fact I don't remember much about anything until Bill is saying ta-ta:

"Very happy to know you, Mrs. How-er-hem-Miss Talbot," he says, and flags us. Which is kinda lucky for him, as I've got my mitt on the ketchup bottle.

"And the rest of the order?" asks the waiter, who'd been hovering in the offing.

"Oh," I growls, "gimme a coupla fish-cakes."

Tillie Ann calmly orders the whole works, and the waiter finally does a fade-out. There's a long and painful silence, broken eventually by Tillie.

"It's a lovely day," she sighs contentedly.

"Was," I manage at last.

"How?"

"You know what I mean."

"Why, Hank Howard!" she registers calm surprise.

"Oh, can that stage stuff," I snap. "Where do you come to make a simp out of me before a pal of mine?"

"Don't be absurd," is her comeback. "Mr. Weston is a man of the world. He recognized my position immediately."

"Sure," I counter, "and he's no doubt telling the gang over there how he recognized mine. Say, I'm no kindergarten understudy neither. I been knocking around this old globe a few spare minutes myself. And I'm telling you that your name——"

"Is Tillie Ann Talbot," she icicles. "And don't raise your voice. Remember we're in a public place."

"Then gobble your grub and let's beat it," I tell her, "so we can finish the fuss in private."

"I have no intention of letting you spoil my day," she airifies. "And as far as fussing is concerned, either here or elsewhere, there is absolutely nothing to argue about. The matter is settled."

Can you beat it? Me spoiling her day! Me, who came out here all full of sunshine and good spirits. But that's a jane all over. Pile the blame on Adam.

It's a rotten holiday; the drive back, as far as conversation is concerned, being done in nothing flat. By the time I'm in from the garage, the frau's framed for bed.

"Now, about what happened this afternoon," I commence. "Let's get this thing settled once and for all."

"Oh, dear," there's a whine in her voice, "please don't begin again. You've made me miserable enough all day. I've got a headache."

WE WERE dashing downhill wildly, with Tillie Ann right in the road.

Drawing by Robert Orr

I'm enough of a married man to know that danger signal.

"Very well," I mollify. "But don't think the thing's settled. Hope your headache's better in the morning. Talk about it then."

But I don't.

Like lots of plans of mice and men, as the saying goes, my mental bet to give this Lew C. Stone guy the razz once and for all is wiped clean off the slate. For next morning I've got a sick Tillie on my hands. No stall headache this time, but a flush of fever. S.O.S. for the medico, and a hurry call for her understudy. Doc says he can't tell. A touch of flu, maybe. I've got a little dope that it's too much chow, or that some of them fish was from the old folk's home.

Anyway, I've got no heart in my work. It's not like Tillie Ann to be laid up. Besides, a hotel room, toward the tail end of a New York June, ain't the choicest spot to pick to be sick in. So when Doc Goodman says that night, just as I'm leaving for the show, "nothing to worry about, but she'll be more comfortable up to the hospital," I says, "Shoot the works, Doc. Hire the whole joint if you want to and I'll park it full of posies."

He grins. "Leave it to me, Hank. She'll be better in no time." I'll say one thing for doctors. They sure is optimists, mostly, and never learned to read a calendar. Of course, I'm up to see her first thing in the morning. There's a nice girl at their box-office.

"What room, please, is Mrs. Hank Howard in?" I ask. She runs through a card file. Twice.

"Howard, you said?"

"Yeah, Doctor Goodman booked her here last night just before overture."

She looks again.

"I don't seem to find the name," she smiles. "Perhaps——"

From way down near my heels there's a wave of heat that shoots up my back and flushes out over my collar.

"Look under the name of Talbot," I gasp huskily.

In a minute she looks up at me, grinning:

"Tillie Ann Talbot?"

I nod.

"Room 616."

Quick I beat it for the elevator. Do I hear a giggle behind me? Maybe. Or perhaps it's just the funny noise some of them elevators make as they come down. Anyway I don't look back.

"Sixth floor," I snap to the lever juggler.

In the corridor there's a sweet looking young thing in nurse's uniform, who stops me inquiringly.

"Room 616. Er—Miss Talbot. All right for me to see her? I—hm. I'm her husband."

She shoots me a knowing smile, with a twinkle in her eyes.

"Oh, we've got several like you around here. Just down this corridor, third door."

I thank her and hustle down the aisle. But not before noticing that the corners of her mouth is twitching and that there's some knowing looks and grins from a bevy of these white-capped cuties nearby. That same hot wave is working its way again up my spine and I'm sure sore to think that Tillie Ann should carry her queer notions even into this prescription palace. Some things should be sacred, and— But the next minute I'm forgetting all about my grouch and I don't care if she never uses my name or just goes by a number. For there's Tillie Ann, in a pale blue nightie with a blue ribbon in her hair, propped up with pillows and completely surrounded with roses. She looks so sweet and pretty and girlish, I just want to take her in my arms and pet her.

"Hello, old dear," she sings out faintly. I don't answer right off, because there's perspiration or something in my eyes and I got to blow my nose hard. Tillie smiles at her nurse.

"Miss Clayton, this is my husband, Mr. Hank Howard.

He's one of the dearest things that ever happened."

Miss Clayton lamps a pair of deep hazel eyes at me.

"Mighty happy to know you, Mr. Howard. You won't let the little lady talk too much, will you? It's not good for her."

I promise I won't. You'd promise anything to a frail like her. She's all rosy cheeks and reddish hair, with a soft, Southern, drawly voice like the lazy music of a summer brook. I don't know where they gets 'em from or who their casting director is, but the guy that does the picking for these nursing jobs would be worth a bankroll to Flo Ziegfeld.

"How is she doing, Miss Clayton?"

"Just fine. She's the best patient ever. We'll have her out of here in no time."

Which makes me feel lots better. Then Tillie has to thank me for the posies and tell me who the other baskets is from. Members of the company. Friends. Looks like they raided all the flower stores for my girl.

Sure enough, in ten days she's ready to leave. A bit weak yet, but okay for transportation, if you'll label the package "Fragile, handle with care."

Tillie's so took with this here Miss Clayton, she's fixed it to take her along to Atlantic City. For Doc's ordered a coupla weeks at the shore. I say, make it a month.

I see 'em off at the station.

"Now don't worry old girl. Everything's running true to form. The old show's ready to wind up anyway, so your understudy can stick to the finish. You think of nothing but getting your strength back. Treat yourself to the best and forget there's an electric sign on Broadway."

She gives me a hug and a kiss that's worth a season's salary.

For two reasons I'm glad she's away. For one thing it's real hot in town. And if you're a New Yorker, you know what that means. When it's hot in this burg it sizzles. In the second place, things ain't at all right at the show shop. It's bad enough losing trade on account of the humidity, but that understudy of Tillie's is sure a quince in the part. Of course I told Tillie Ann she is good, not wanting to worry the old girl. As a matter of fact she plays with as much pep as a peeled potato. We've called extra rehearsals, but what's the use! This jane just ain't got it in her. And it's too late to switch any one else into the part. The answer is in the box-office. Receipts trail off like an income tax report.

That ain't the worst of it. My new show has to be got ready. I'm committed to costume, scenic effects, lyrics and music. And there's supposed to be a book handed to me long ago. Do I get it? I do not. Yes, the usual cut-and-dried girl-and-music mush. There's plenty of that. But not a real idea. As usual, it falls back on little Hank to do the work. I'm doing my best, too, but it don't amount to much. When it comes to ideas, my noodle is numb. I just ain't got the right angle.

One thing I know. The public wants something different. Only thing's kept "Girls and Giggles" going is a tip-top show, clean zippy comedy, and Tillie Ann Talbot. I'll reverse that. It's Tillie Ann in a good setting. Now that she's out, no wonder the business is flooey.

"I'm supporting the movement for women to keep their own names."

So I try an afternoon at the ball park. Rotten game. Hot. I leave in the sixth inning.

That night I study the show over carefully. That frail's so different from my Tillie Ann, she makes me lonesome. I slap up the two week's notice.

Which is as it should be. For next day there's a fine long letter from Atlantic City. Up to now Till's letters has been post-cards. They're her long suit. But this is a letter. I don't recognize it at first, because the envelope's marked Hotel Cravendish. Which is a new one on me. She's supposed to be at the Blitz. Here's her news budget:

Darling Hank,

Don't be too surprised at this stationery, but I moved here yesterday. Yes, I'm feeling fine. So wonderful, in fact, that I've sent Miss Clayton back and have taken a beautiful room here. I know you're liberality itself and never count expenses when it comes to your Tillie Ann. But—this will please you—I've decided to follow your advice and stay on here a month. That's why I couldn't see paying big boardwalk prices. This is a much quieter hostelry, very dignified, patronized chiefly by Southern people. No show folks. Which is what I want. Except that I'd like to see my boy. I think of you up there in the hot city and wish you could run down. It would do you lots of good. Besides, a rolling chair never was made to ride in alone.

You don't write, so I know you're busy. How's the layout for the new show? Got any real ideas yet?

If it's too hot to write, don't bother. I know you love me. From one who loves you the same.

Your Tillie Ann.

The minute I get that letter I know what's been biting me right along. I'm hungry for a look at her. I squint at my watch. Four-thirty. Too late for the Atlantic City train. I hate to wait till tomorrow. There's a five o'clock out of Penn Station connects at Philly. That for me.

Throwing some things into a grip, I just make that five o'clock rattler. We almost reach North Philadelphia okay. But then there's a wait. Hot box or some usual railroad excuse. Anyway, it's past eleven before we touch the great American playground. The Cravendish don't sport a bus. Leastwise, not at that hour. But the taxi bandit knows the layout and lands me finally at the door.

The place looks all shut up. Tillie Ann ain't exaggerated none. It's sure got "respectability" stamped all over the front.

The colored boy who takes my bag pussyfoots in, like it was two A. M. If Tillie wants a place to retire early and get lots of sleep, she sure picked a head-liner.

I'd like to see her right off, but on second thought guess I'll not disturb her till morning.

"Be with us long?" asks the clerk, after I've registered for room and bath.

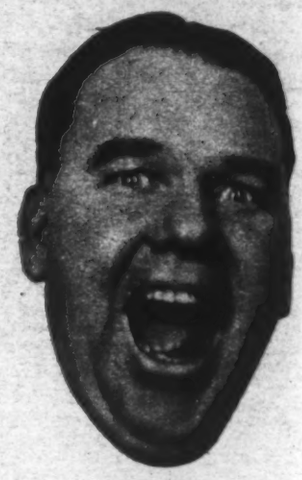
"That depends on my wife. What room is she in?"

He looks at the name again. Then at one of them long index cards hanging to one side.

"Mrs. Howard?" he inquires [*Continued on page 103*]

Just a COUPLE

New York's First Microphone Minstrels Began with Radio Sets Salvaged from Submarine Chasers



Here is BILLY JONES, telling 'em a funny one over the radio in what he calls a low voice.

By That Popular Team—

NOW that we've finished singing our song, "How Do You Do, Everybody," we'll go into the dance. Watch us carefully. If your speaker is loud enough you shouldn't have any trouble following the steps.

Perhaps we should label ourselves as we take turns at the typewriter, so you'll know which is which.

ERNIE—It's hard for me to type because while fixing my radio set the other night I spilled some acid on my hands and made them smart.

BILLY—Why didn't you drink some of it, to make you——

ERNIE—If that's the way you're going to act, let's see if you can do any better. (Tell 'em in a low voice, Billy.)

BILLY—I just got back from my vacation. I went there to get away from radio, but I got the air just the same. Did you take a vacation? (Tell 'em in a high voice, Ernie.)

ERNIE—I went to Virginia where my folks live. They have an old negro servant that's been with them for years, and one night at a formal dinner party he was told to announce the guests. The Fergusons—there are eight in the family—arrived. George Washington began:

"Majah Fe'gsun, Missus Fe'gsun, Miss Annie Fe'gsun, Master Jack Fe'gsun—" and so on, down the line.

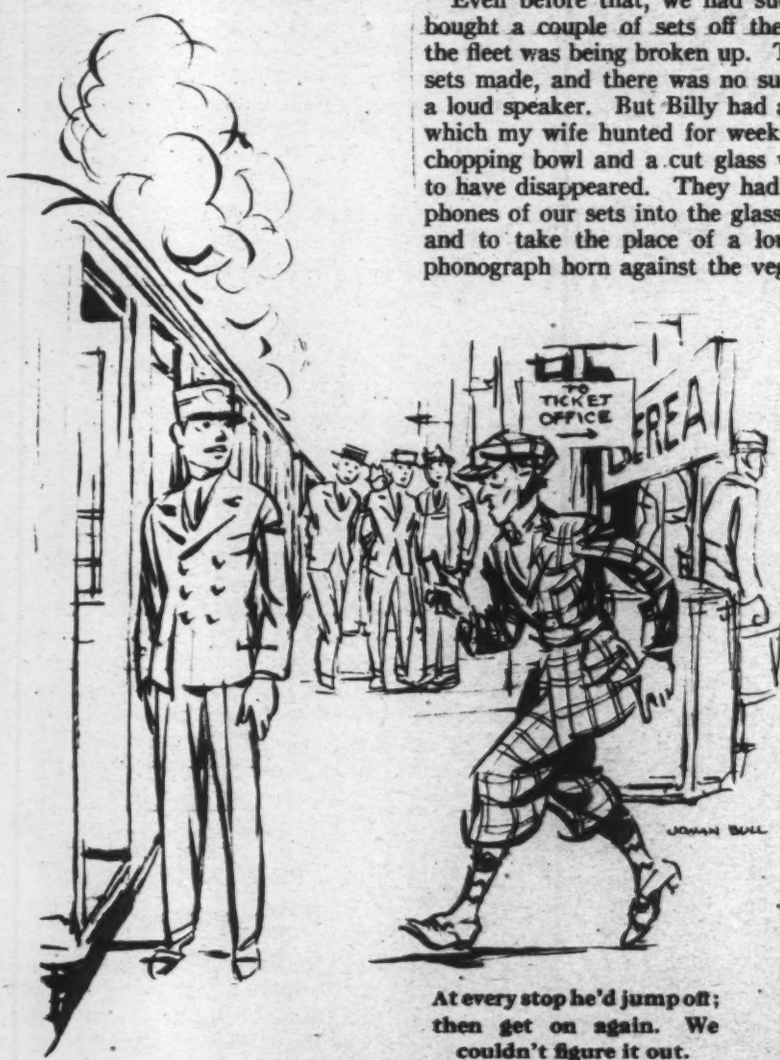
I went over and told him it wasn't necessary to make such long announcements. I asked him to introduce the next arrivals as briefly as possible because we wanted to get the dinner started.

A moment later Mr. and Mrs. Penney and their daughter Adeline came in. George Washington stuck his head in the door and yelled:

"Three cents."

BILLY and I have been on the air for five years now—three as the Happiness Boys—and our greatest satisfaction is that we followed our hunch in spite of what our friends said. We had been making records for the phonograph companies, and when radio first started we became interested in it. The phonograph people told us we were crazy; that we were biting the hand that fed us, because our work on the air would kill the sale of our records. But we didn't listen, and were the first to broadcast in the New York district—from WJZ, Westinghouse, Newark, in 1921. And now we rise to remark that there haven't been any we-told-you-so's.

Even before that, we had such faith in radio that we bought a couple of sets off the submarine chasers when the fleet was being broken up. These were among the first sets made, and there was no such thing in those days as a loud speaker. But Billy had a good idea, as a result of which my wife hunted for weeks all over the house for a chopping bowl and a cut glass water pitcher that seemed to have disappeared. They hadn't. We had put the earphones of our sets into the glass dish for better reception, and to take the place of a loud speaker, we hooked a phonograph horn against the vegetable dish.



At every stop he'd jump off; then get on again. We couldn't figure it out.

FROM time to time we've been asked to open various stations, and that means traveling around the country. Once when we were on our way to Cleveland there was a Scotchman on the train. At every stop he'd jump off and then get on again. We couldn't figure it out, and after the fifth jump we asked his companion what the big idea was.

"The doctor told him," his friend said, "that he's got heart trouble and may pass out at any minute. So he's playing safe, and buying his tickets from station to station."

In the studio, when we broadcast, we always have an audience

# of LOUD SPEAKERS

ERNEST HARE shook so much from fright once that a dollar bill in his pocket was changed into dimes!

"THE HAPPINESS BOYS"

of about sixty or seventy. Some radio entertainers would rather not have any one around, but we like it. The stimulation of encouraging smiles helps. And if some one yawns I can say, "Ernie, you're terrible." And Ernie says, "Billy, it's your fault." And we're both satisfied.

But one night we arrived at the studio just in time to dash into the broadcasting room and start our program in front of the mike. We pulled a couple of new gags that we felt were unusually brilliant. In fact we thought they were so funny that we laughed right out loud into the mike ourselves.

But the faces in front of us remained solemnly serious. No one even cracked a smile. We looked at each other and got more nervous every minute. We tried a couple more gags, still newer and funnier, but the same thing happened—exactly nothing. I shook so hard from fear that a dollar bill in my pocket was changed into dimes. We came out, mopping our brows, and told the announcer that our program that night was an awful flop because we couldn't get any response.

He laughed and said we needn't worry. He explained that just before we had come in, he told the visitors that they must not laugh, as that disturbed the air waves or something. They took him so literally that their faces were almost frozen.

ANYWAY, if immediate audiences won't laugh, radio entertainers have the consolation of letters they receive from listeners-in. People write and tell us what they like or don't like, and those letters guide us in the selection of our programs. Some of them send us material — home-made songs, gags that are good, and gags that we recognize as some we used several weeks back. Of course, we're human enough to get a kick out of the pink- and blue- and lavender-tinted notes that ask us for pictures or descriptions of ourselves.

To those who inquire as to the cultivation of a radio voice we might answer that I play golf and that Ernie likes hand-ball. We're also great hunters—don't stop us if you've heard this one!—we shoot craps.

On the subject of material that is sent to us, there is the case of the young lady who enclosed a song she had written, and asked us to sing on a certain night. We promised we would. She wrote back thanking us and saying we mustn't disappoint her as she'd told her friends and they'd all be listening in.

We sang the song on the certain night. But, as we were informed later, we were off the air for six minutes that evening. A tube had blown out of something in the studio. We were unaware of the fact, and it was during those six minutes that we sang her song. We sang it beautifully, of course—nobody heard us so there's no come-back. And since that's how it was, we hope that when the young lady and her friends read this they will realize we weren't at fault.

WE ALSO get our share of the mash notes that make life worth living for the microphone minstrels. The other day some one wrote and told us that they had named their two goldfish Ernie and Billy—after us, because they were so flip. But pink-, blue- and lavender-tinted notes that begin, "I am eighteen years old and have brown eyes and curly blonde hair" Billy insists are for him. He claims they can't be for me because I'm married and have a little daughter.

I took this three-year-old youngster of mine to the studio with me one day, and holding her up on a chair facing the mike, told her to say hello to the people listening in. Without a stop any place in her remarks, she piped up: "My name is Marilyn Hare my dad is Ernie Hare he sings over the radio with Billy Jones how do you do everybody?" It's great to have your own family give you free publicity.

A radio entertainer's wife is able to keep tabs on her husband. One night I almost got into difficulties with Mrs. Hare over a situa-

[*Continued on page 123*]

As the guests entered, George Washington yelled: "Three cents."

Concluding A Vivid

The CAPTAIN

By

Last Month

CAPTAIN DIXON and Captain Homan, two retired sailors, longing again for their old love, strike an unusual bargain with the daughter of a former shipmate, whereby they man her sloop—the *Spindrift*—for a trading voyage to the South Seas. They locate on an island called Paradise.

Then on one of his trading expeditions Captain Homan rescued the sole survivor of a wreck, one Roger Wynyard, and he was added to their little coterie. Of course he immediately fell in love with Java and became concerned for her safety—since the natives back in the mountains were known to be cannibals. To this end he made a friend of the puri-puri man, Hanua, who agreed to let him witness a native religious ceremony.

IT WAS a night of no moon, the skies like blue-black velvet, lit by stars. They shed little quivering paths of light on the lagoon, dimly lit the dark ways into the bush where the puri-puri was to be held.

The head man of the boys had come for Wynyard, and in a dead silence, utterly unlike his usual cheerful greeting, led the way up a narrow trail which the white man had never seen before into the bush. There was a thudding of bare feet about them, the people gathering to the celebration. The air was so stifling still that every sound had added value. The crack of a branch was enough to make a man jump.

The muted sound of bare feet increased as they came through the narrow path which now suddenly ended in a great clearing. The stars shone down into a space clear as a ballroom. Silent ranks of natives squatted about it, and others silently dropped into their places. At one end was what looked like a rough

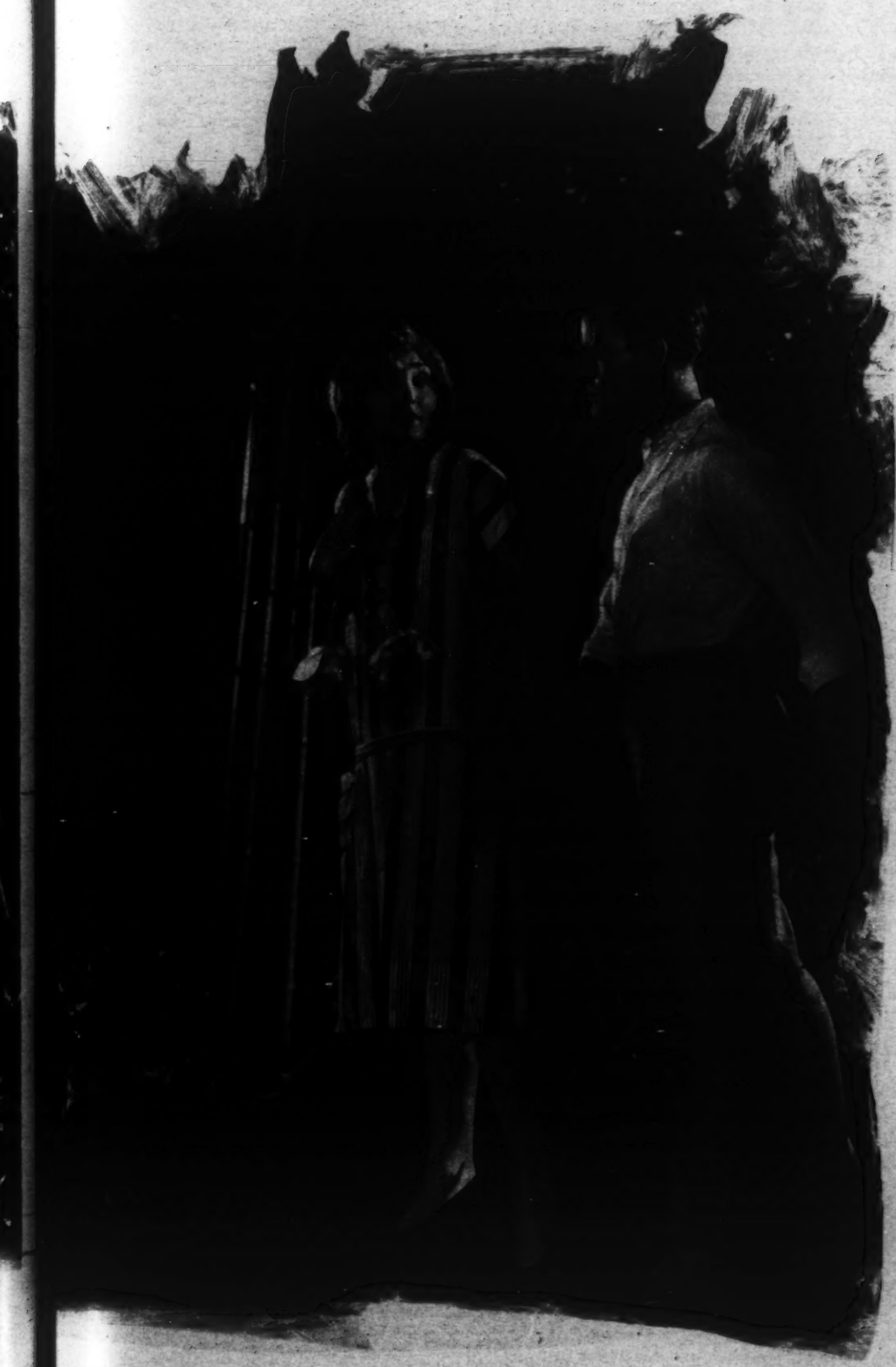
They went back hand in hand

Story of the South Seas

L. MORESBY

—the pen-name of a noted novelist

HERSELF



to where Hanua stood like a statue, and Wynyard spoke: "Hanua, what can we do?"

altar of coral rock, and behind this were two devil-devil figures, very large and dim in the darkness. A man whom Wynyard guessed to be Hanua, crouched before the altar. He himself was guided to a position on the left of the altar and the overseer took his place beside him. No women were present; always a sign of something dangerous or highly ceremonial in the islands.

The movement in the bush ceased at last. All were assembled, and Wynyard saw that a pile of wood was heaped in front of the altar, and that a man, writhing along the ground like a snake, had set himself to light it. In a flash the darting flames, fed by coconut oil, sprang up through the tree-trunks and flooded the dark faces with fire.

Hanua, his wild mop of hair stuck with Paradise plumes and flowers red as blood in the fire-light, appeared to be clad in an armor of strung shells. Moving, he rattled like a beach torn down by waves. Suddenly he sprang in front of the altar and flung up a braceleted arm, striking the hollow devil-devil beside him. It boomed like a great gong, and as it did so, a slow light kindled in its empty eye-holes, growing and growing till they shot rays across the dark.

Wynyard could hear the movement of fear, the shudder like the hiss of a snake that ran all round the clearing. And then a horrible thing: from the wooden jaws of the devil-devil came a voice. Hanua was crouching beside it now, his head on the ground, but the tall image roared like the hollow thunder of angry surf.

"Ventriloquism. How well the fellow puts it over," Wynyard said to himself.

Then Wynyard was aware that something lay before the altar on a sort of rough hand-bier made of crossed sticks—something long, straight and narrow, dead still in the midst of the movement and whisper of fear. Even as his eyes caught it there was a stir under its covering, as when a man turns himself in bed before rising.

A sick man brought for healing? No. Too straight, too thin, it made scarcely a lifting under the cover. Then what? His eyes fell on Hanua, and he saw the sweat

drops form on the native's forehead and run down his face like rain on a window pane. That answered him. He knew.

Very slowly the covering moved. The thing that lay inside was raising itself. Hanua flattened himself into the ground. An arm of fleshless bone pushed the covering aside, and a leg followed, footless, horrible, with a curved pig's tusk where the foot should have been—and lean, eviscerated, a skeleton covered with dry skin crept out of the bier and stood beside the devil-devil. Wynyard pulled himself together.

"I see it but I don't believe it. It's devilry. It's lies, lies, lies . . ." he said in his soul, but did not find the words reassuring.

A feeling of physical sickness took Wynyard, and he half rose to go from the hateful place. Hua dragged him down, silent, but with a grip which needed no words. He knew it would be as much as a hundred lives like his were worth to make any disturbance at such a ceremony.

Suddenly the dead man spoke through locked jaws—unlike the roar of the devil-devil—a far, faint voice which seemed to come from thousands of miles away. Ventriloquism again, of course.

The voice grew fainter—the body tottered, wavered, collapsed on the ground beside the altar. Hanua, rising to his knees, crept to it, and lifting it like a child laid it back on the bier. Then he crawled before the altar and poising a great vessel poured liquid all over it that sprang to flame as he poured. He flung his arms abroad, chanted some words which appeared to parody a parting benediction, and then collapsed himself in a rattling heap, burying his face in his arms.

It was over. Wynyard got up with the feeling of exhaustion which comes from long tension. He was probably the only living white man who had seen the ceremony of the Last Words of the Dead.

AFTER long consideration he resolved he would speak to Java before risking a word to the uncles. He knew very well that she was the real commander of the island. He caught her at the usual time after the evening meal and coaxed her down the beach for a walk. To Wynyard she was beauty itself in her white dress—a lovely ghost in the starlight—and he could have looked and longed for ever. But Uncle Enry would wake presently and hail Java for the glass of grog which only she could mix. So Wynyard plunged straight into the story of last night's adventure. She stood still, listening intently.

"I mean to see Hanua tomorrow," he said, "but I want to know first what you think, for you know these people a lot better than I do. What did it all mean? Was it dangerous or just their own ghastly religion? Have any of the women said anything?"

"Kuki told me this morning that it was a great pow-wow, though she didn't call it that. She said a dead chief talked and told the men all that was to happen for a year, and the men 'flenty flightened.' Of course she didn't know what was said, or pretended not to. They'd kill a woman who talked about men's business."

"Don't you think I'd better see Hanua?"

"Yes, I do. I wish I could go with you. You might ask him to come along and see me. Say I have a present for him."

"Good, but I want to take him a present myself. Something glittering. Can you think of anything? We must win that man for keeps if we want to know what's stirring."

"Righto! I'll find something. I know! I've the top of an old ottoman worked in red wool and beads. That would be a real glad rag for his next jamboree. You come up and I'll find it before the uncles wake up. Don't you say a word to them yet, Mr. Wynyard. They're two darlings, but not exactly what you'd call tactful."

No, they were certainly not tactful. No respect for the sorcerer's powers could be expected from either, and Wynyard felt the wisdom of her caution. They went softly up to Stephanotis Cottage, and she glided between the chairs of the slumberers into the house. Presently he saw her leaning out of her window, framed in white blossoms. Her beauty went to his head like strong wine as he crept up to the window, her face only a little above his own.

"Look here!" she whispered, and held out a square of scarlet wool, worked in cross-stitch and decorated with a bunch of calla-lilies in white crystal beads, a hideous and glittering achievement of her grandmother's youth. She waved it like a banner before his eyes.

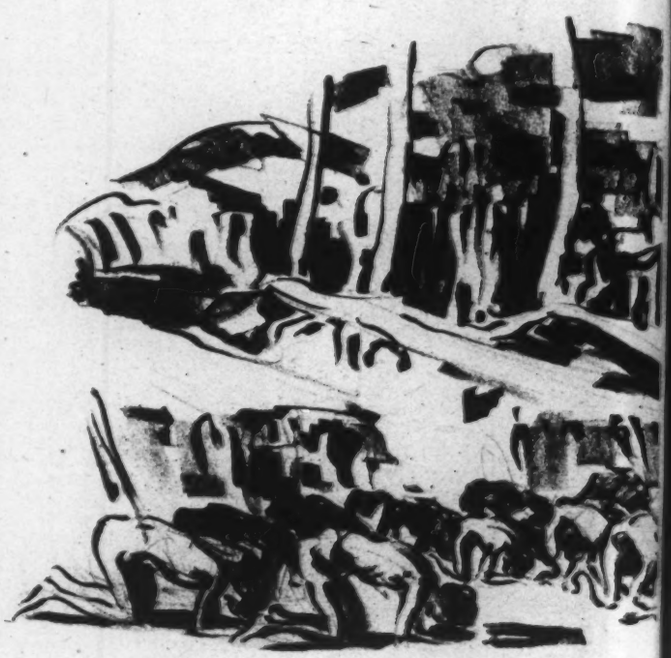
"You take that. It's sure to catch the medicine-man right in the heart. Just you look at the scarlet, and the fringe. And look at the lilies! Did you ever?"

Her eyes spilt laughter on him from among the flowers. There was a light behind her, and it turned the outline of her hair to gold mist. He caught the hand that waved the banner and kissed it.

The casement was shut in his face instantly. Uncle Enry, waked by the bang, called fretfully from his chair.

"Java, it's grog-time. You come along."

Next day, when work was over, Wynyard made his way to Hanua's abode, and found the Marys lounging round the door, shining with coconut oil, decked out in profuse grass skirts ornamented with feathers, shells, and ribbons of bright seaweed. He asked at once for Hanua, and they rustled to the door, presently beckoning him to come in.



Drawings by Golinkin

Wynard raised his two fiery hands and

Wynyard lit his pipe and offered his host a chew of tobacco which was graciously accepted.

"That big puri-puri, Hanua!" he said, after the silence custom demanded. "You biggest puri-puri man in the islands."

A smile of gratification.

"People flenty flightened," he said briefly, and relapsed into meditative chewing.

"But what devil-devil say? What big chief he say?" Wynyard demanded. Hanua shot one quick glance at him and dropped his eyes.

"You jump inside—you flightened when him speak?" he asked.

Wynyard hesitated. Would truth offend or impress? Difficult to decide. But he chose his course and laughed.

"I no jump inside. I know you make talk all time. Dead man no talk. Puri-puri man talk all time same from him

stomach." Carelessly he puffed away at his pipe.

Silence. He looked through the tail of his eye at the wizard, half expecting a rush and a roar. It did not come. On the contrary the great man smiled.

"You savvy that?" he asked, shifting his chew. "You no telling, eh?" The white teeth showed in a grin.

"I no tell. No good telling fools," Wynyard said coolly.

Confidence was established, but still the mystery was unexplained. What was the man after?

He produced the scarlet square and draped it against Hanua's brawny breast. The squeal of delight that followed brought the Marys running in to admire. It was agreed that it was a dress for a chief.

Wynyard explained in his best sandalwood English that he wanted to know if there were any mischief afoot and what was the purpose of Hanua's own oration delivered through the devil-devil and the corpse. He was lavish in flattery. He knew, he said, that though there were big chiefs around, Hanua was the biggest of all. There were great rewards for a puri-puri man whom the white masters trusted. But naturally Hanua would understand two

saw the whole assembly sink to their knees.

things. First, that only great service could claim great rewards. Second, that those who were traitors had better remember how long and strong was the white arm.

Hanua listened in deep meditation.

"I savvy," he said at length.

He liked Missy—he began with that. When the rusty nail which had secured a chief's head on a stick ran into his foot with results to be expected, it had been a bad business for Hanua. Naturally, if a medicine man couldn't heal himself, the islanders would lose belief in him. Wynyard would realise that. But he had taken his canoe round in the night to the beach where Java always walked in the moonlight, and there he had displayed a tortured foot and she had dressed it and given him a pot of ointment. In short the rival practitioner had cured him. Moreover, sizing up the case with her usual swiftness, she had told him she wouldn't breathe a word of her success but would resign all the honors to him. Hanua was grateful and had cause to be.

"Very precious," said Wynyard to himself, "is a woman who can hold her tongue, and like all precious things uncommonly rare. And there is only one of Captain Java.'

But that was only the beginning of the tale. Hanua had once been down to Port Moresby, the only Paradise Islander who had, and in that gay metropolis, as he considered it, the power of the white man had immensely impressed him. He realised perfectly well on which side his bread was buttered, and that a temporary victory of the black interests would be an expensive pleasure in the long run. Wynyard nodded approval at this point, and Hanua's own grin was humorous.

But there was danger, though not immediate. Not perhaps for a year or so. Paradise was not only unpleasantly isolated, and off the general cruising lines of the men-of-war. But comparatively near, and very present were the islands of Kaulevi and Sumbau, inhabited by the cannibal blacks known all over the South Seas for ferocity. They desired to be masters of Paradise Island and the promising plantations of the three partners. And Missy? Did the *taubada* remember how on two of the colonized islands white women had been swept away into the bush and never heard of more? He did.

"What about the mountains?" Wynyard asked. Hanua paused a moment in doubt. Dared he speak? Wynyard saw the fear in his eye. Then Hanua's glance fell on the calla-lilies. They encouraged him with the promise of noble rewards.

"*Taubada*, the mountains bad, bad, flenty bad. All trouble come from mountains. War canoes come in Ratua."

Ratua was the harbor, a snug place for landing unknown to the colonized side of the island.

"You watching, me watching. When I send white stick you come alonga clearing and I tell. Now—finish. No more."

He shut his lips like a rat-trap and stood up. Wynyard also. He saw the wisdom of silence and separation if they were to cooperate.

JAVA, sternly ignoring the hand-kissing incident, met Wynyard with her usual baffling friendliness that evening. There were moments when he would rather she had struck him in the face than have shown that cheerful absence of emotion. For what could it mean but utter indifference? She strolled down the glimmering white path with him and when out of earshot of the captains, came straight to the point and asked what he had thought of the sorcerer on closer acquaintance.

"Funny old duck!" said Wynyard easily. He had decided it is not good for young women to be frightened and that details were best kept to himself.

Java looked at him composedly.

"Yes, I know that already. What else about him?"

"Nothing particular 'cept that I'm pretty sure he'd help us out in a tight place if it didn't try him *too* high. Beyond a certain point I wouldn't swear to my faith in the gentleman."

The blue eyes regarded him inflexibly. She laughed quietly.

"*What* point? *What* tight place, Mr. Wynyard? Don't you think you'd better tell me the whole yarn? Come now," she urged, "get it out comfortably."

He ended by withholding nothing.

"You see," he said eagerly when he was through, "we must keep it as dark as hell, Miss Dixon, otherwise we sell Hanua and our chances. But the point is this—should we meet trouble half-way? Quit, and come back when the razzle-dazzle's over; or stay here, living aboard the schooner; or best of all—you make a bee line for Port Moresby, and leave us men here to see it out?"

Java's scandalized look tripped him up suddenly here, and to his own amazement landed him in contempt. She

Java pulled the mother-of-pearl image out of her breast and compared it with the one just found.

turned abruptly toward the house, without another word.

"Forgive me!" he said earnestly, apologizing to her unspoken wrath. "I'm the most cursed blunderbus unhung. But you know you *are* a woman, and men fight easier when a woman isn't knocking about!"

For answer she unbuttoned a crevice of the bosom of the cotton shirt she wore, disclosing within a glimpse of steel and ivory. Then buttoned it and turned seaward again, making no reference to the disclosure.

"What!" she said. "Go and leave all our work, our home, everything to those black hounds from the islands? I'd sooner curl up and die on the spot than give in like that. And as to living aboard the schooner, that might have to come later but it's hauling the flag down if we do. And if we did it now you can see for yourself it'd give away the whole show."

"Well then, what's your advice?" he asked.

"Not a word yet to the uncles; but when you get down to Nukulu on the next run send word from there to Port Moresby that there's trouble brewing up this way, and let them send a cutter, or better still a gunboat to patrol a bit. We shall have no peace till the mountains are smoked out."

"Yes, the little busy bee is pretty securely hived up there. But I go to Nukulu and leave you here with Captain Homan? Not I, Miss Dixon! You'll have to work it out some other way, please."

"Can't!" she said with a little quick grimace that showed her white teeth. "Uncle Enry can't go 'cause of his lumbago. Uncle Erbert won't go alone now he's got used to having a mate and . . ."

"Then let them both go and I'll look after you and the island," cried Wynyard audaciously. The look she cast at him wilted him on the spot. She led the way back to Stephanotis Cottage, walking like a queen.

"Wait till we hear again from Hanua," was all she condescended. "You know there's no fear until you get the white stick from him."

IN A fortnight's time things stood thus: no white stick had come from Hanua; the voyage to Nukulu was drawing near, and Captain Homan's lumbago still was in the ascendant. He could not go.

So it was settled for good or bad, and the *Spindrift* sailed on the appointed day. It was a prosperous voyage and Wynyard got his message down easily to Port Moresby, for it so happened that the government patrol cutter was at Nukulu on her way back from Outward Island.

It was an azure day of eternal summer and the gentle wind, capricious as a woman, was blowing sweetly astern when they again sighted the mountains of Paradise, blue, dreamy, melting into a haze.

"Pretty, ain't they?" said Captain Dixon. "I'd like to make a few days' trek up that way sometime and see what's doing on up in the bush. Wouldn't you, Wynyard?"

"Guess I would," Wynyard said through set teeth. "And we may have to do it one day, sir. I don't like the accounts I hear of the playful savage up yonder."

No sooner did the anchor run down than the dinghy was hoisted out, and Captain Dixon took charge of the tiller while Wynyard got out the oars. They made the little pier with speed.

The boat's nose grated on the coral rock. Wynyard jumped out and made her fast. Captain Dixon lumped out leisurely.

"Funny Java don't come to meet us. Guess they're down at the swamp."

Not a word from Wynyard. He was at the end of his endurance, and he ran for his life up the white path with Captain Dixon grumbling in the rear.

The door was closed, the casements flung back as usual to let in the sweet air. He hailed. No answer. He opened the door. The sitting room, neat as a new pin, the rosebud curtains swaying in the breeze. Java's workbox on the table, a book open beside it. The kitchen—no fire in the cooking stove. The bedrooms spotlessly tidy. And everywhere dead silence. He turned speechless to Captain Dixon who was standing in the sitting room, repeating:

"Down to the swamp, that's where they are. You run along and fetch 'em."

Wynyard cast one dreadful look at him and raced down to his own hut. The door there was closed also and nothing disturbed. But something was added. On the little table beside the door lay a stick peeled white. He caught it up and stared at it one moment, then dropping it ran for Hanua's house as he had never run in his life before.

Darkness within as usual. The puri-puri man was putting the last touches to something which was propped on a short stick resting on the ground. A human head. It added the last turn of the screw to Wynyard's inner anguish.

"What has happened?"

The head rolled over and lay regarding them with cold curiosity as Hanua leaped to his feet.

"No savvy," he cried. "No savvy! What long?"

"You savvy. You send stick."

"I send 'tick, yes. Flenty flighten mountain men come soon. Not yet. No."

"They've come."

Wynyard stared at the man with eyes dull with terror. Was he shamming? What did he know? The impulse was to shake it out of him as a terrier shakes a rat, but Hanua himself was shaking now from head to foot.

"Missy gone? Capen?"

"Gone. You tell all you savvy, or——"

He drew something from his pocket that glittered in a slip of sunlight. It clicked and Hanua drew back shuddering; then pulled himself together with a manly touch not lost on Wynyard. The savage eyes met his and did not fall.

"Me sending 'tick for hearum mountain men make great puri-puri four day from now. But while me workum chief's head, no man come near me. I no savvy nothing two days. If Missy gone I no savvy. I flenty sorry. More better you telling me good words. I help."

Wynyard knew that was true. While working on a chief's head the sorcerer was tabu. Not a human being would enter his house while that ghastly work was proceeding. His whole manner changed into smooth ease as he stuck the shining toy into his pocket again.

"You helping me, Hanua. You telling all you savvy. You getting rich man."

They drew close to each other, with a cornerwise glance from Hanua at the door.

It amounted to this: Hanua had had word three days before that two war canoes were due to arrive in Ratua Bay in a week; that there was to be a mighty puri-puri up in the mountains when they came, for the chief of Wakilu was deadly sick and it was believed a devil-devil was in charge of the trouble, a devil-devil of the highest rank, who must be propitiated regardless of cost. Sacrifices, feasts, offerings, all were to be on the highest scale of pomp.

Sacrifices? Wynyard's eyes flashed horror into Hanua's when he grasped that meaning. The rarer, the costlier the victims... He knew! Hanua knew even better. And there the tale ended abruptly.

But the men outside must know, Wynyard said, moistening dry lips. Let Hanua ask them. Hanua divested himself of the special garment he must wear for his head-curing work. He made a signal to Wynyard to be quiet, and stalked out before his door to hail several ancient goblins gossiping under the trees.

Talk followed, angry, abusive, commanding. A conch shell was sounded, and the shattering roar was a summons for feet that came running. Many men's voices chipped in. There was all the sound of a crowd sharply alive and interested.

Presently Hanua returned and Wynyard faced him, white and cool. They knew, he explained, but had been afraid to speak. Best go on working until *taubada* came back. Two hours before a party had come down from the mountain and had carried off Missy, and tied the old Capen hand and foot and laid him in the bush. Missy had said nothing. Capen nothing, because they had put korbash, the juice of a sleepy plant, over their mouths on a cloth, and so carried her off, "same dead man," and left the Capen helpless.

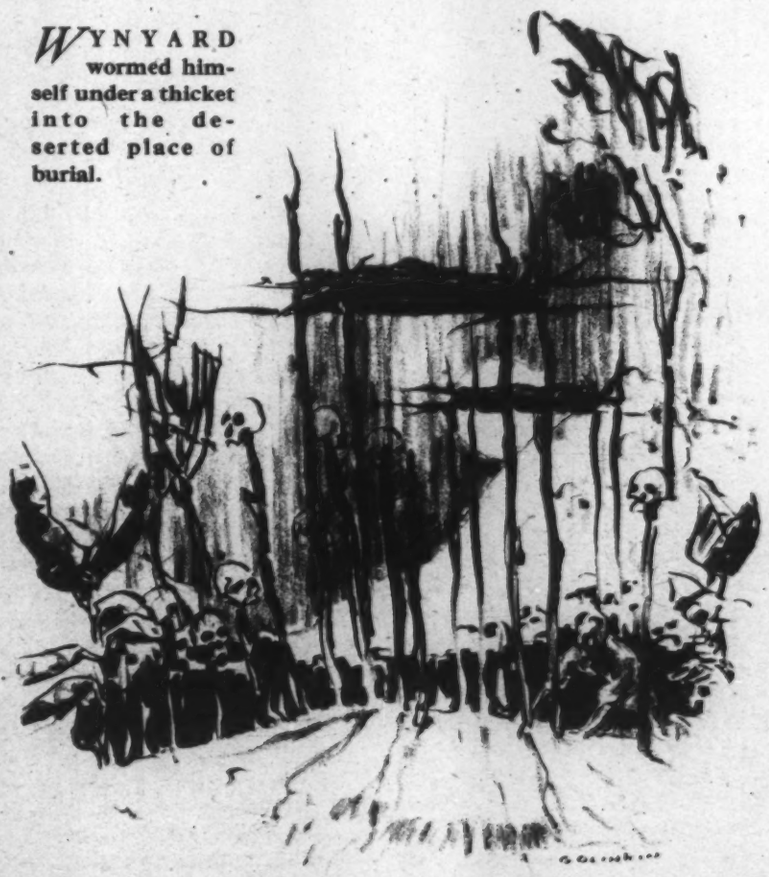
"And these brutes went on working as if nothing had happened?" Wynyard asked, in bitter contempt.

Hanua wanted to know what else they could do. They could not come to him, for he was tabu with the head. Not a man on the island could have faced the awful puri-puri in the mountains. The *Spindrift* was gone and they could not tell that she would ever return, and what would be their own position with the mountain people? No, from their point of view it was reasonable to sit still and do nothing.

Would they help now Wynyard asked, and Hanua shook his head violently. Would Hanua help? Yes, but he must think. He would break the tabu of the head and come over in the evening. There was a silence, and then the savage spoke again.

"Bad, bad," he said. "They black fella they want Missy. She big woman not like other Mary. They know that. She puri-puri."

Wynyard, almost crazy with anxiety, could not make anything of this. Puri-puri? Would they sacrifice her? What? And still Hanua shook his head. No more talk, but Missy not like other people. Wynyard gave it up and went back to Captain Dixon.



WYNYARD wormed himself under a thicket into the deserted place of burial.

He found him, with Captain Homan on the sofa still too dazed by the drug to give any account of what had happened.

"If we'd only warned the Government cutter at Nukulu!" moaned Uncle Enry.

"You be easy, sir," Wynyard said. "I got that done. I'm thinking what to do right here."

It was near ten o'clock before Hanua came, free of tabu, and crammed with information. They had trekked with Missy up by the river. Not a man would go after them, but they could be trusted to stand by Capens Homan and Dixon until . . .

Here he paused; his eyes were sparkling strangely. Then added that he himself would go and bring back

[*Continued on page 123*]

SAX APPEAL

He could play the blues in forty different shades —but she taught him fifty-seven new varieties!

By JESSE GELDERS

His orchestra was a wow! When the telegrams started they

WALTER FOLWELL ought to have listened to his pal, Smoke Lewis, in the first place. Smoke told him often enough.

"A girl is naturally dependent," Smoke would explain, fingering the strings of his banjo. "Helpless, see? But you treat her like an equal, and she'll take advantage of of you. Get me?"

Walt would wrinkle one eyebrow upward, slant an amused glance at him, and go on brightening the silver finish of his saxophone. He was hard to convince, having peculiar ideas where Ruth Nelson was concerned.

Everybody around the Sylvan Glade dancing palace knew how much Walt cared for her, and how he told her all about his plans for organizing his own orchestra, just as if she were a man. Naturally it was not long before she was trying to give him advice about things.

She probably meant no harm, for it was easy to see that she really liked Walt, which was not strange. He was tall, and his eyes were dark brown, and so was his hair, with a crisp sort of wave in it. And to hear him playing in the Sylvan Glade orchestra, where he still held his job, you would have thought that he was born with a silver saxophone in his mouth.

The new orchestra was promised a trial engagement at the Hotel Belbadore, which was to open in a few weeks. When Walt mentioned this to Ruth, she congratulated him delightedly enough, but then she asked would he be ready.

A short while later, when he wanted to take her to a cabaret, as he frequently did, after the Sylvan Glade had closed for the night and her duties there as an instructress were over, she objected. It seemed she had the notion Walt should get home early, and that the orchestra should begin to practise mornings.

Walt lifted an eyebrow, and looked down at her quizzically. Then he insisted with some impatience. Of course he succeeded in having his way, but such things are irritating. No man likes to have two consciences. You cannot help being born with one, but you do not want an assistant for it, even if the assistant has pretty blue eyes and light brown hair and a chin that tilts up when you talk to her.

So it was not surprising that they had a clash. A party was being given at one of the night clubs, and Walt asked her to go with him.

"I can't," she replied.

"What do you mean, you can't?" Walt laughed, naturally thinking this was the same as her previous refusals.

Ruth looked at him with that queer, straight gaze and said, "I have another date."

Walt reddened and grinned, apparently not knowing just how to take this statement. "Didn't I ask you, before?" he demanded.

"Yes," Ruth nodded. "But I said 'no,' didn't I? I'm not going to be keeping you out, when you ought to be——"

"Oh, forget it!" Walt cut in, displeased at having this subject brought up again. "Is that the only reason——"

"No. I told you I have a date."

For a moment Walt was silent, thinking over the seven or eight fellows who generally besieged Ruth for dances. Suddenly he remarked with a touch of sarcasm, "So that's why you've been—— Well, don't put yourself out for me!"

Ruth looked surprised, and flashed back a reply. There was a hot exchange of retorts. It ended abruptly.

"Look here!" Ruth said in a quivery voice. "You can't talk that way to me!"

had to be carried in baskets.

And she spun around and whisked to a window at the far end of the hall. And according to one of the fellows who happend to pass that way, she stood there, staring out—*and crying*.

Walt told Smoke of the quarrel, during the intermission that night.

Now Smoke was not exactly the man who invented knowledge, but you could easily see he made free use of it. He knew, for instance, that when a fellow has a heartache for a particular girl, the best treatment is a counter-irritant. So in a very tactful way he led up to a prescription.

"Hey, who are you going to take tonight, instead of Ruth?" he inquired.

Walt said he did not think he would go at all, and Smoke pointed out that if he did not, the laugh would be on him.

"Listen. Why don't you take Lisette Bangle?" he advised.

Walt hesitated, and Smoke went on: "She's *there!* And she likes you, too. Get me? There she is now. Hot baby! What do you say? Some kid. Hey?"

Lisette was halfway down the ballroom, doing a little slice of the Charleston, jouncing and flapping her hair, which was the newest and most attractive shade of red. One glimpse of her, and you could tell right away that she was an exceptional girl, and not the sort to try to give advice, or to break into tears over anybody, as Ruth did.

When she saw Walt and Smoke looking at her, she came toward them, stepping with a little spring and a hitch from some new dance. *Hot baby!* Her hair had the glint of tabasco. Her lips were a work of art. And stockings? They were so sheer you could not tell she had them on, unless you saw the seams.

Smoke said, "You're looking great," and she replied, "So's your Aunt What's-her-name."

They indulged in some clever repartee, and Walt was drawn into the conversation. By the time he and Smoke had to hop back onto the orchestra dais, they had arranged to go to the party together.

When the time came Smoke asked another girl along for himself, so Lisette could be with Walt. The party was at a place called the "Drinkoj Inn," and they all had a peppy time.

In fact, next evening, Walt had to admit that he was not sorry he had gone to the party. He sat, leaning forward with his elbows on his knees, and did not say anything else for quite awhile.

Then he mumbled: "Smoke, I had a good time all right. But I don't know. I keep thinking about Ruth."

"Yeh?" responded Smoke. "Why? You've put her back in the deck, and drawn again, haven't you? You've got a queen now."

It was hard to understand why Walt had preferred Ruth in the first place. Lisette was so much showier in every way.

You would never have guessed that the two girls had once been thought to look alike. But it was true. Smoke nodded toward where they were both sitting, in the alcove reserved for instructresses, and told Walt about it.

He had gone to the same school the girls did, and he remembered that people who did not know them used to think they were relatives, they were so alike in appearance. Lisette's name had originally been "Elizabeth," but she had marcelled and hennaed it, along with her hair. Well, anybody could see that Ruth did not know how to use these modern improvements; she just kept the same colorless name, and everything else. Of course she was pretty, in an innocent sort of way—"Makes you feel kind of funny," Smoke admitted, "when she looks at you so straight, with those blue eyes of hers"—but she never took advantage of any of the devices which make a girl striking, so that men who do not know her will turn around and stare.

For instance, she had quite a bit of jewelry, which had been bought before her father lost his money. Well, she never wore more than one piece of it at a time; she did not seem to know how to make a big spread with everything together.

As Smoke said, you certainly would not have expected a man of Walt's personality and future and everything to fall for a girl of that type. For in every other way Walt exhibited his mature judgment. He was proving as good a manager as he was a musician, which was saying a great deal, for he could play the blues in forty different shades.

The success of the new orchestra venture seemed more and more certain. The date was definitely fixed for the Belbadore opening. A radio station was connected with the hotel, to broadcast the music. Walt arranged many details that no one else would even have thought of.

He was talking to Lisette one evening, mentioning some things about the new orchestra.

"Of course there's a lot of practising and work to be done yet," he said. "We're going to feature a bunch of new pieces. And it looks as if we're going to get to make some records. A friend of——"

"Oh!" exclaimed Lisette. "That's hosty-totsy. Say, some of the crowd are going to the Club Nowater tonight. Do you want——"

"I was going to type a couple of letters," Walt demurred, "and get home early. Tomorrow——"

"Aw, come on," Lisette urged, fidgeting on her feet; she never stood still, she had so much pep.

Walt lifted one eyebrow, and looked down at her, grinning, without saying anything for a moment. Then he made a little flipping gesture with his hand, and said, "All right," and laughed.

"What do you mean you never thought of him," Smoke demanded of Ruth, holding up the pawn ticket.

The new orchestra did not practise next day, on account of Walt's arriving late, but on the following afternoon they were at work again. Walt had rented an old hall, and they practised there. As he stood out in front, leaning, there was something about his vigor and precision that always made itself felt from the first note.

They tried a piece called "On the River Boat."

"Good!" Walt commented at the finish. "Now let's take it again."

This was a queer fault of his. Though they were already playing well, he always wanted something more. You almost suspected that he hoped to have the waiters at the Belbadore laughing and wailing with saxes.

"Hey, what are you after?" Smoke demanded. "You want to make the tables get up on their hind legs and dance?"

But Walt shook his head unreasonably, and persisted in his peculiar plan. He might have continued all day, but luckily Lisette arrived, and coaxed him to go downtown with her. Naturally this was not the only occasion when she helped to get him away from unnecessary drudgery.

But he began to encounter other annoying problems. In the middle of one afternoon's practise, the telephone rang. He answered it, and from what he said it appeared that the party at the other end was a representative of the phonograph company with which he had been negotiating to make records. The man must have mentioned having written a letter, and not having received a reply to it.

"By George!" Walt exclaimed into the transmitter. "I intended to write you. It must have—by George! I'm sorry, Mr. Kendalby."

There was a few seconds' lull, during which Mr. Kendalby was speaking, and then Walt replied again:

"Yes. Yes. Oh, but—that would be tomorrow, in shape yet . . . I'm afraid—I'm sorry, but we can't . . . We're a new organization, you know. Not quite in shape yet . . . Yes—I should have let you know we couldn't. I'm sorry. If—Hello? Hello! Hello!"

Walt put the receiver back on the hook, and turned from the phone, looking like some one who has just spilled a cup of coffee at a banquet table.

"He hung up," he said. "He's sore."

Cecil Leedy, the trombone player, asked a couple of questions, and for some reason or other Walt took the full blame, instead of smoothing the affair over with a plausible excuse, as he might easily have done.

"I should have answered his letter," he said, biting his lip. "He was counting on us for tomorrow. Went out of his way to arrange things."

"What's the idea, turning him down?" demanded Purdy Klaw, the drummer. "As long as he was willing——"

"It does look pretty funny, [*Continued on page 76*]

The Girl Who Would GO TO THE DEVIL

"BUT I want to! Wild horses couldn't stop me!" he shouted.

By PAUL DERESCO AUGSBURG

MID-AFTERNOON in Morganville. The month being June, a heavy, lazy heat beat down on the town. From under a locust tree on the courthouse lawn Ed Loftus contemplated Morganville's one business street with easy complacence. He was enjoying a luxuriant, contented feeling in the consciousness of a job well done; better done than he or any one else had ever expected him to do it. And, further, there was the Big Boss's telegram.

Ed took out the yellow message, leaned back on an elbow, and lingered over the words like an epicure with his *pâté*. "Good work; come in" . . . and then the Big Boss's name. That was all, just those four words. But from that gruff old veteran of the slap-bang days when reporters worked twelve hours and wrote columns, "good work" was equivalent to a thunderous ovation.

The telegram had come two hours ago, and there was still another hour before the Chicago express would stop for him at the station agent's signal. Ed had dined leisurely at the Palace Bakery and Lunch Room, had been shaved and shined and even massaged at John Hammerschmidt's Barber Shop, had sauntered around to say good-bye to Sheriff Widner and State's Attorney Mason, had paid a patronizing visit to the *Bulletin's* local correspondent—and now there was nothing to do but loaf pleasantly in the shade of this locust.

His musings took a philosophic trend. He pondered, for instance, the eternal juggle by which one man's misfortune may be another's good luck. Take himself: he had scaled the heights to the Big Boss's unwonted commendation over the ruined reputation, you might say, of the Reverend Stephen Bramstead Uplake. Just one of several conscientious, ambitious young reporters, he had plugged along seemingly unnoticed until this downstate scandal broke and gave him his chance.

For it had been that sort of story. They happen every so often; and because a clergyman is involved, rather than a shirt salesman or somebody equally eligible to fall afoul of the devil, the papers give the details ample mention, with pictures and diagrams plus quotations from the Scriptures.

This fall of Pastor Uplake had been unusually spectacular. He had preached in Morganville for the last twelve years, raised a family of three handsome girls, and been pointed to by numerous wives of the town as the sort of spouse their husbands ought to be. Then came the night—just a week ago—that a farmer-neighbor of Mrs. Jebwith heard three shots fired as he was passing her place along the Decatur Highway. Rushing home and getting his shotgun, the farmer had returned to find the widow dead, Pastor Uplake wounded . . . and the revolver beside Mrs. Jebwith!

The clergyman died three days later. His deathbed confession, the small-town furore it occasioned, Mrs. Uplake's grim, tearless composure, the funeral with its pitiful handful of mourners and crowd of curious spectators had all been chronicled by Ed Loftus and his fellow reporters from Chicago. In one day—the day of the confession—twenty thousand words of press matter were put on the wire at the local telegraph office.

Ed Loftus had done himself proud in his stories. He had caught the small-town atmosphere, which is so cherished by your metropolitan newspaper, and brought the whole picture of palpitant Morganville before the *Bulletin's* half a million readers.

But that was not the reason the Big Boss sent his monosyllabic message. No, indeed! It was Ed's enterprise in finding the thin little packet of notes which had passed between Pastor Uplake and Mrs. Jebwith; his discovery of these curiously passionate missives written, like school day *billets doux*, by the middle-aged shepherd of Morganville's largest flock. It had been the outstanding

reportorial achievement of the entire scandal, giving the sinners a fresh chuckle, the righteous another blush, the clergyman's reputation a final smudge. And doubtless there'd be a raise in the pay envelope for Ed Loftus next Monday evening, too.

Ed replaced the telegram in his pocket and watched the town marshal tie his horse to a hitching post. The sunlight gleamed for a moment on the marshal's badge of office. Ed chuckled. He had made the town marshal something of a celebrity.

"Hi, Colonel!" Ed called, and the tall figure turned around.

"Hello, there, young feller. What you findin' to write about today?"

"Nothing at all. I'm leaving you pretty soon; back to the wicked city."

"Back to Chicawgo, eh? Well, I guess Morganville will seem a little lonesome with all you news fellers gone."

"Better come along," Ed grinned. "Return the visit, Colonel. Quit being so doggone proud."

"Well, now, I wouldn't mind doin' that if——"

"Say," the reporter interrupted, "isn't that Edith Uplake coming?"

Both fell silent and stared at the figure approaching them across the square. As she passed her head was down, her features wanly fixed under the broad brimmed hat; but in her walk there was a dainty grace, almost catlike in its subtle manner, which had attracted Ed's attention the first time that he saw her. It was something that set her apart.

"Headed for the post-office, I reckon," said the marshal after she had passed. "She takes it queer, like she didn't much care. Hasn't said scarce a word—not even to Sue Lonsberry, and Sue's her closest friend."

"Pride," Ed declared authoritatively, but he was vaguely conscious of feeling disturbed. "But, say," he demanded, "I thought she'd gone to her married sister's at Windsor."

"That's right! Supposed to leave yesterday on the stage."

"Sure!" Ed looked searchingly at the marshal and got to his feet. "I'm going to ask her. Might be another story."

As he ran toward the girl Ed could not help but wonder at the coolness of her appearance. The heat did not seem to bother her at all. He caught up with her at the corner of the court-house.

"Hello," he began. "Thought you'd left town."

Edith Uplake raised her head and stared at him vacantly. Then her gray eyes narrowed and her lips pressed tightly together.

"Oh, it's you!" she said coldly . . . "Well, aren't you about through hitting women and dead men?"

Ed gasped.

"You needn't look so surprised," she snapped. "Oh, I know you're with the *Bulletin*, and I saw what you put in it this morning. That was a mighty fine, brave thing to do, Mr. Edward Loftus! You see, I even know your name."

AS SHE passed them, her head was down, her features wanly fixed.

"Aw—" was all he could say, but his face was hot as the steaming pavement.

"Oh, cheer up, Mr. Edward Loftus! Don't sulk; I'll give you another fine article for your paper. You can just say that Edith Uplake, youngest daughter of your latest victim, is leaving for Chicago to go to the devil. Yes, you can say just that. And you can add that she didn't decide to run away until the *Bulletin* came out with all her father's letters in it. Just say that, too. I'll dare you to!"

There were no tears in Edith's eyes. Yet looking at her there as she faced him in the square, he instinctively realized that the girl had passed that stage of suffering. She was numb, dried up inside, spiritually warping: like others he had seen in the tragedies of a crowded, passionate city.

Ed tried to say something soothing, but the words only added to her bitterness.

"That sounds fine, coming from you!" she cried. "Thank you so much. That's mighty kind of you, I'm sure—*mighty* kind."

"But there's no sense going to pieces because of something you couldn't help. Nobody's blaming *you* for what your father did. They all feel sorry for you."

"SHE takes it like she don't care," said the marshal.

"I won't be felt sorry for!" she answered him defiantly.

"Aw."

"I'll go to the devil first! If—if everybody thinks papa was so wicked, I'll be wicked, too. I'd *rather* be! There, you can put that in your dirty old paper!"

She resumed her walk across the square, and once more the ineffable grace of her set up disturbing currents in the young man's head. Again he started towards her, but this time she turned to meet him.

"I shouldn't have told you," she began anxiously. "Now you'll tell everybody in town, and— You *won't* tell, will you?"

"Not a soul."

"Please don't," she went on, her tone conciliatory almost humble in her fear of being discovered. "I'm afraid they'll stop me from going. They're such busybodies—everybody around here. And if I don't get away, some place I'm not known, I'll just go crazy." Her eyes pleaded with him. "You won't tell?"

"Of course I won't! . . . Say, look here, Miss Uplake, I'm not as rotten as you seem to think. Tell! Why, I'll *help* you, as far as that goes. I'm taking that train. Isn't there some baggage, or—"

"Oh, will you?"

"Sure, I will."

"Oh!" she said, brightening, "I'll tell you—you can get aboard with my suitcase and ticket, and no one will know the difference. I'll jump on, the last second, way up front . . . If you're willing to do so much," she added doubtfully.

OUT of the corner of his eye Ed saw a figure in white dart from behind a baggage truck and jump aboard the second coach. Then the train seemed to tense itself, there was a sharp respiring cough from the engine, and the familiar faces of Morganville began slipping past his vision. He saw Ben Wilson pointing towards the front of the train and talking excitedly to Sheriff Widner. He caught the words, "Sure, it's her! Guess I ought to know." Then his eye met the Sheriff's and he waved a jaunty farewell.

"So long, Sheriff! Take good care of the county!"

"Good-bye, there, son!"

The train rumbled over the frogs at the junction and extended its pace as it left the town behind. For an instant Ed saw the Widow Jebwith's little farmhouse caught between him and the setting sun. A second later its rays were glaring like a heliograph upon a side window—the same window Ed had crawled through to find those love notes.

His pilgrimage down the car aisles was almost over. Opening the last creaking door, he shoved his two suitcases into the second coach. Edith looked up anxiously.

"Care if I sit down here?" he asked her hesitantly.

"No; go ahead." Then, remembering her old resentment, she hastened to add, a bit sullenly: "You've done me about all the harm you can, I reckon."

"But not intentionally, Miss Uplake . . . You believe that, don't you?"

"Well, that's what you say."

"But I *mean* it. I honestly do. I—you know, I've got to earn a living like every one else. I didn't do anything any of the others wouldn't have done if they'd got the chance. It was all legitimate."

"Well, I'm glad to hear it," was her sarcastic comment, and Ed made an impatient gesture with his hand.

Two miles dropped away before they spoke again. The low sun vanished behind a wooded knoll; and when the prairie again stood out flat and unrelieved, it had slipped below the horizon and left the [*Continued on page 118*]

PRENNY SMITH took on the duties of host at Claire Elway's house-party. Only one rule was enforced: cocktails for every one at 5:30 prompt.

By WARNER FABIAN

Author of "Flaming Youth"

SUMMER

In the Preceding Instalments:

THE gayest sufferers in New York during the hot weather are the "summer bachelors"—married men whose wives have gone vacationing. Derry Thomas chose to know these men intentionally: she had reasons to wish to avoid marriage—business as well as personal reasons—and married men she thought would make safe playmates.

In this night club crowd she met the actress, Willowdean French, whose affair with Walter Blakely was causing much comment. And soon her own casual summer flirtation with Tony Landor began to assume serious proportions. Tony turned out unexpectedly to be quite unmarried, and the type she could come to care for. So Derry thought to nip the affair in the bud by running off with Bev Greenway.

But one morning in a state of hypnosis brought on by a "hypnotizing globe"—a strange invention of Blakely's—something happened to Derry which mysteriously caused Beverly to change his plans. Derry could never explain the cryptic telegram of farewell from Bev, which read:

I HAVE TRIED TO WRITE YOU BUT CANNOT GOD BLESS YOU AND GOOD-BYE B. G.

By what inexplicable compulsion, Derry pondered, could Bev have come to his conclusion.

A Novel of Night Club Life

BACHELORS

CHAPTER XVIII

"IT ALL depends on what your theory of life is." Preston Smith sat in Derry's easiest chair, clinking a small float of ice against the side of a large glass.

"I didn't send for you to talk philosophy, Prenny. And that isn't an answer to my question."

"Well, I'm not on the witness stand, you know," he reminded her mildly. "Besides, it's a very good answer. Devilish deep and clever, in fact."

"I ask you who stuck a pin in Bev Greenway and why, and what kind of pin it was, and you put on a goofy look and spout drivel about theories of life."

"Bev is a very nice boy."

"Of course he is. That's why I want him to play with."

"He'll come back some day."

"Cured? Is that the idea?"

"It seemed to some of us best for him to have a change of air."

"Then you *are* responsible for his going! I knew it."

Mr. Smith attached his gaze to the left hind leg of Derry's writing desk. "Ain't the moon lovely when full!"

he remarked esthetically. Derry smiled indulgently.

"Oh, well, I'm not going to break my heart over it."

Preston Smith became grave. "If there had been any reason to think that you really cared——"

"But I do! An awful lot. You don't know. You go crashing ahead as if you'd been in conference with the three Fates, messing with other people's lives on the bluff that you're acting in the interests of morality. Who elected you to the Watch and Ward Society? You and Deenie and Blackie? I'm very cross with you, Prenny."

"You'll get over it. You always do."

"That's my luv-al-ly disposition. Old dear, do you know that I'm nearing the end of my rope?"

"How's that?"

"Vacation's almost over. My stern employer sails in three weeks. Indicating that about a month from date I shall resume my life of rectitude."

"Resume?" he asked, significantly.

"Amendment accepted. One can't resume something that one has never left, can one?"

"You'll find it dull," he prophesied.

"Oh, I dunno. I'm about ready to admit that, as a dashing daredevil, I'm a complete flop."

"You don't dash very far. The hundred yards is about your limit."

"Fishing, Prenny?" she demanded, suspiciously.

"Don't have to," he returned with irritating assurance. "I know just about what you intend doing in any given circumstance. But I don't know what you think about it after you haven't done it."

Derry sat up straight. What did Prenny mean—

"Haven't done it?" she repeated.

"Well, you haven't, have you?"

"Haven't done what?"

"Anything."

"Prenny, *what* did I say under the influence of that shiny glass marble of Blackie's?"

"Not a thing."

"Then how did you get——"

"I'm judging from general impressions of your kaleidoscopic career. Whether there's any logic or scheme back of the interesting proceedings is something else again."

"Prenny, is there any chance of Blackie's getting free to marry Willowdean?"

"I'm afraid not. In fact, the signals at present are set stormy. Blakely's wife is suspicious."

"Prenny! How do you know?"

"I saw her last week, at a dinner party. Do you remember Corcoran, the champion bean-spiller of the universe?"

"Do I remember him! Can I forget him!"

"He was there with a bagful of assorted beans. Some of 'em were marked with the Blakely name."

"How much does she know?"

"Not much. Enough to set her on edge. She might come back to town any time."

"I'll warn Deenie. Not that it will do any good. She's mad. Oh, well—all the wives will be trooping back to their summer bachelors pretty soon, and the happy days of play will be over. Help me to get up a farewell bachelor girl dinner, will you, Prenny, for the very last?"

"Aren't you going to play at all?" asked Prenny dolefully.

"Saturday nights I *may* go to the movies," she said in the manner of one making a perilous concession. "But not with you, old thing, or Bev, or Marty, or Dick, or Barham, or—or anybody. Back to your happy homes for you. You may send me that birthday case of champagne for my dinner and you shall sit at the other end of the table and be Papa, and at sunrise we'll all sing 'Auld Lang Syne'—all that *can* sing by that time—and I'll go around the table and kiss you all good-by, but you the last, because I'm awfully fond of you, Prenny, and if you were a real bachelor I'd probably forget all my good intentions and marry you just for the satisfaction of taking care of you and the fun of bringing up the kids . . . Don't choke to death!"

After a pause, he said with a gallant effort: "Is Tony Landor coming?"

"I wish you wouldn't always be ringing in Tony Landor," she fretted. "No, he isn't."

"If it's to be really a farewell dinner—or are you reserving him for the Saturday night movies?"

"No, I'm not," she asserted with superfluous violence. "It's just as much good-bye for him as for any of you. More! I'll invite him."

"We ought to make the short remaining time a whirl," reflected Prenny. "I'll fix a program. Of course, there's Claire Elway's party to reckon on. Some one said you were trying to side-step that. It isn't true, is it?"

"I've got to go to Canada. Business."

"Then Claire must change her date. It wouldn't be a party without you."

"I suppose I *could* postpone my trip."

"Do that little thing for my sweet sake!"

"Finish your drink, Prenny, and have another, and we'll jink around to the theater and pick up Deenie."

Walter Blakely they found already there. He and Willowdean had become quite reckless of appearances; he was at the theater every night, as if they had deliberately determined at any cost to make the most of the enchanted time which might come to an end any unforeseeable day. Derry disapproved, even while she sympathized. There was so much to lose for both of them. But she had made no attempt to influence her friend. Meddling in other people's lives was, by Derry's code, the unpardonable sin. At the Recherché

Drawings by Golinkin

Languid young athletes and tanned girls buzzed in, assured of welcome.

where the circle gathered at midnight, according to habit, Willowdean made opportunity for a word aside with Derry.

"I got an anonymous letter today."

"About you and Blackie?"

"Yes."

"What did it say?"

"Oh, the usual dark threats."

"Do you think it was from—her?"

"No. Too illiterate. It said that she knew."

"I'm afraid that's true, Deenie." She gave a carefully guarded version of what Preston Smith had told her.

"What am I going to do about that?" mused the actress.

"Have you told Blackie?"

"No, poor lamb!" She looked across at her lover with a passion and tenderness almost maternal. "He's worrying himself raw over this as it is. I don't think it's ever out of his mind—except when I make him forget."

"Deenie, couldn't you——" Derry hesitated.

"Give him up? No. Not until I have to," said the other firmly.

"That isn't what I was going to say. I wouldn't ask you to, loving him as you do." Willowdean's velvety glance thanked her. "But couldn't you be a little more careful about being seen together? Like this?"

"There's so little time," murmured the other. "I feel as if something were slowly closing down on us."

"Oh, go ahead!" advised Derry, changing her attitude with swift vehemence. "We've got only one life to live. I've been going through that feeling of time closing in on me, too. But mine's definite."

"You're not really going to quit this game and be just a dull time-clock-puncher, are you, Derry?"

"I'm not going to quit you, old girl. But I'm going to can the rest of 'em definitely. It's all right for vacation, but my game is business, not playing little feverish, footless games of love—which is what I've really been doing. It looks as if I'd go back to my highly correct employer any maybe I'll end by taking him as part of the business. There might be some safety in a business marriage; there certainly isn't in a love marriage."

Said Willowdean: "I tried to drag Tony Landor here tonight."

"Wouldn't he drag?"

"Not when he found you were to be here."

"Flattering, that; what?" smiled Derry.

"He said you didn't want to see him."

"Not so entirely accurate."

"Do you?"

"Yes."

"Then why don't you?"

Derry chuckled. "That sounds fatally twisted. I suppose I'm a fool not to grab what I can. But—but, Deenie, I'm afraid of that young man. He's got the marriage germ and it's something catching."

"I think you needn't worry about that any more."

Derry's eyes popped wide open. "Oh, *in*-deed! He's off the idea?"

"That doesn't seem to please you either. You're hard to suit."

"I'd like to have him keep on wanting to marry me, for a while, anyway, until I can get used to his not wanting to. But I'd like him to keep it to himself."

"*I'm going to see* him once more," was Willowdean's quiet answer.

"He will. He's over it. He'll never ask you to marry him again. I'll guarantee that."

Justly incensed by this cool alienation of her property, Derry said hastily: "I'll bet he will."

"Name your bet."

"You're a queer one, Deenie," complained the girl. "A little while ago you wanted to bet that I'd marry Tony, and now you want to bet that he'll never ask me. D'you expect *I'm* going to ask *him?*"

"You'll have to, now, if you want to get anywhere with him."

Derry reflected that her friend could be very provoking at times. But her tone was that of determined good humor as she said before rejoining the table: "Bring him around some night. This place is open to all respectable persons not engaged in enforcing the prohibition law."

But Tony Landor did not choose to come around to the Recherché. To Derry's growing annoyance over his unaccountable behavior, there was now added a touch of misgiving. She really did not want him to get away entirely; that is, until—well, unless—anyway, he was acting very queerly. What did Willowdean mean by her much-too-assured guarantee? Was Tony becoming interested in some one else? Claire Elway, perhaps. There had been talk of an old affair between those two. In that case Derry certainly would not oppose his being asked to Claire's week-end party. She would show him that she was a good sport. But in order to show him she had to see him, didn't she? And he remained unseen.

She was quite unprepared, some noons thereafter, to find him, as she looked up from her work, blocking the

Hearing the hum of his car, Derry had crept out of bed to see him go.

office door. Ten dollars, yes, twenty, would she have gladly given not to have dropped her pen. It struck on its point, and stood palpably quivering in the thick rug. Derry felt quivery herself. She collected herself and pointed to it gayly. "Indicating visitors," she said.

"And here I am," he confirmed.

"Why?"

"Lunch! If you don't mind. Will you?"

"Yes."

"Ball game?"

"No."

"Busy?"

"Very."

He sat down to wait. Derry retrieved her pen, wrote five painstaking words, then——

"Tony," she said confidentially, "I hate you."

"Why?"

"You're so darn unexpected."

"Haven't you been expecting me?"

"No," lied Derry. What did the imbecile expect her to say!

"You can always get rid of me."

"I'm going to, right after lunch."

Derry and Tony subsequently confided their respective impressions to Willowdean French. Said the girl:

"I never ate such a dam' *neutral* meal in my life!"

"Was Tony stupid?"

"He talked like a snappy dialogue in Act II. But he was so poisonously impersonal."

Said the man: "It was the hardest job of my life not to grab her and tell her I was crazy mad about her and there was nothing I wouldn't do to get her."

Willowdean held up a threatening finger. "Curb that impulse. You'll lose out if you don't. I know Derry."

"How long have I got to keep this up?"

"Until after Claire Elway's party, anyway."

"Is Derry going to be there?"

"Yes. But you'll hardly notice the fact."

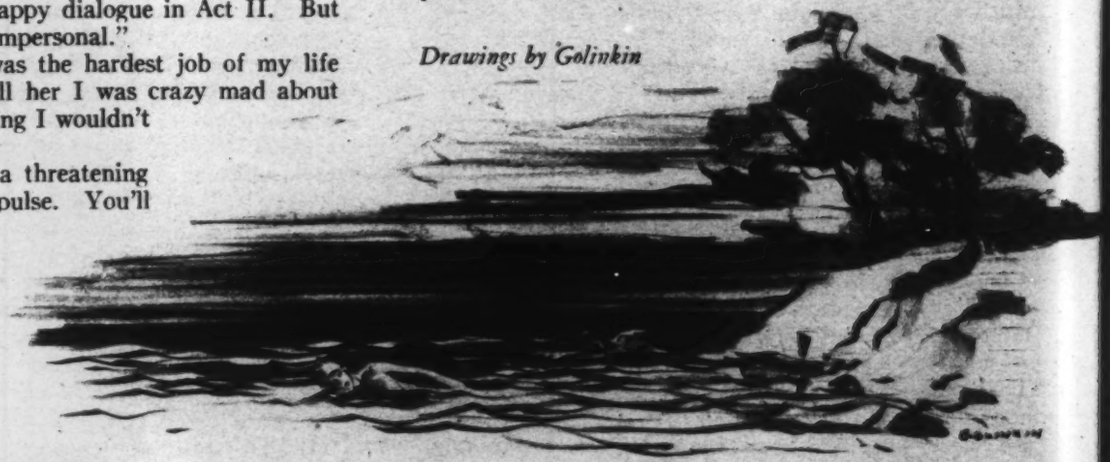
Tony emitted a groan. "Willowdean, if I lose her now! There was a moment, at first, when I thought she was going to fall on my neck. Then it was all off, and then again—oh, I don't know where I stand."

CHAPTER XIX

CLAIRE ELWAY'S place, characteristically named Go As You Please, rambled along an indented shore-mile of a long and narrow mountain lake. Everywhere money had been spent without stint for comfort and convenience; nowhere a dollar for show or needless luxury. Guests were expected to furnish their own capacity for amusement; all the outer mechanism was ready to hand, from canoeing to golf, from roulette to mountain climbing. The hostess's responsibilities ended definitely with seeing that the company had the wherewithal to eat, drink, play, and sleep; for the rest they were expected to look after themselves. Of the suppositious host, the former Otley, there was no word, other than reference by his wife to an unfortunately imperative business engagement which had called him away. In his absence, Prenny Smith would take upon himself the whole duty of a host, which appeared to be mainly that of seeing that the bar did not run dry. One rule and only one was enforced; every one was expected to answer the long roll for first-round cocktails at 5:30 prompt.

The party had grown on Claire Elway's hands, both in time and dimensions. A second great tide of heat having crept in upon the oppressed city, the management of "Hands Up," after two of the cast had collapsed, declared a temporary closure after Wednesday; whereupon Claire, with Willowdean for assistant, had reorganized her plans, made it a rest-of-the-week-and-Sunday invitation, enlarged her list to capacity of her house, and started the whole cavalcade in eight cars and an ice-chest-bearing convoy, at midnight after the performance. They arrived at a little after sunrise after having violated the speed laws of three states, five cities, and thirty-six villages, and parceled themselves out for a few hours' sleep. Derry found herself in the "Hen-coop," as the main house, reserved for women guests, was irreverently termed, next to Willowdean on the second floor. The men were mostly in the shore house, a few being lodged on Bachelor's Rock, also part of the Elway ownership, a tiny rugged islet half a mile out in the lake. All the summer bachelors' circle was there; the cream of the cast of "Hands Up," and a dozen well-picked outsiders.

Drawings by Golinkin



Something disturbed the waters a little back of her.

"I'm ready to admit," said Derry, "that as a dashing daredevil I'm a complete flop."

From the first, Derry was made to feel that the party was in her honor; a festal send-off before the parting. Not that any except her very few intimates credited her purpose. The others predicted confidently that after a short absence she would come back to them.

Every condition in life has its drawbacks. The white light that beat upon Derry's throne attracted too many moths. She had no chance to be alone, or semi-alone, which was, rather, what she had in mind. Every one else seemed to be pairing off by easy opportunity: Willowdean with Blakely; Prenny Smith with little Sara McIntyre, who was giving him quite a flutter; the beauteous Barham with a dangerous looking friend of Claire's; and Claire, herself, when not on duty, with Tony Landor. But there was always a crowd around Derry, so it seemed to her. At times Tony was part of that crowd; certainly he had not neglected her; had danced with her at appropriate intervals; had asked her to play with him in the scratch golf tournament; had seated himself next her once at luncheon. But these were all public attentions. Of any wish to be alone with her there was not the smallest indication.

Something doing every minute was the obvious schedule of every day. If it wasn't sailing it was mountain climbing; if it wasn't dancing it was roulette or faro; and always the bar kept up to the demands of its patrons. Martin Cole was one of the most ardent and steady customers. When he wasn't drinking he was moping and wandering about like a lost soul, obviously looking for Willowdean, who was seldom to be found. To the regular house-party there were daily and nightly accessions. Languid young athletes and tanned, tawny girls from the country club a few miles away, buzzed in in cars or drifted in in canoes, and mingled in the party with perfect freedom and assurance of being welcomed.

One of these casuals, a youth of apparently undergraduate caliber and of cherubic innocence of countenance, fixed his guileless blue gaze upon Derry and decided that she was *good*, as he promptly informed her, adding that to be really good in the all-around sense, one needn't be bothersomely good in certain particulars. How would she like to take a little run in the little old speed-boat to a little shooting club a few miles away, and have a little supper and a little light conversation?

Derry replied demurely that she would adore it above all things, but that the damp air from the lake was bad for her weak lungs.

Seeing that Tony had observed the ardent attentions of her young cavalier, Derry deliberately prolonged the tête-à-tête, meanwhile enjoying the latest collegiate patter. When she had finally dismissed the cherub Tony rose from his chair. Now he was coming. Derry composed for herself a gay and casual little smile. Tony turned, looked about him, his glance ranging some six feet above her head, turned again and walked down the steps, away from her.

Well-of-all-things!

Stifling under a spell of helpless indignation she saw him exchange a word with Willowdean and join the crowd, putting for five dollar sweepstakes on the clock green.

Derry could have kicked him! But preferably she could have kicked herself. If the cherub would only come back now, she'd show Tony! Just spite. But maybe Tony was unspiteable. Cold and clammy thought! Looking around for the absent cherub, she met Willowdean's eye.

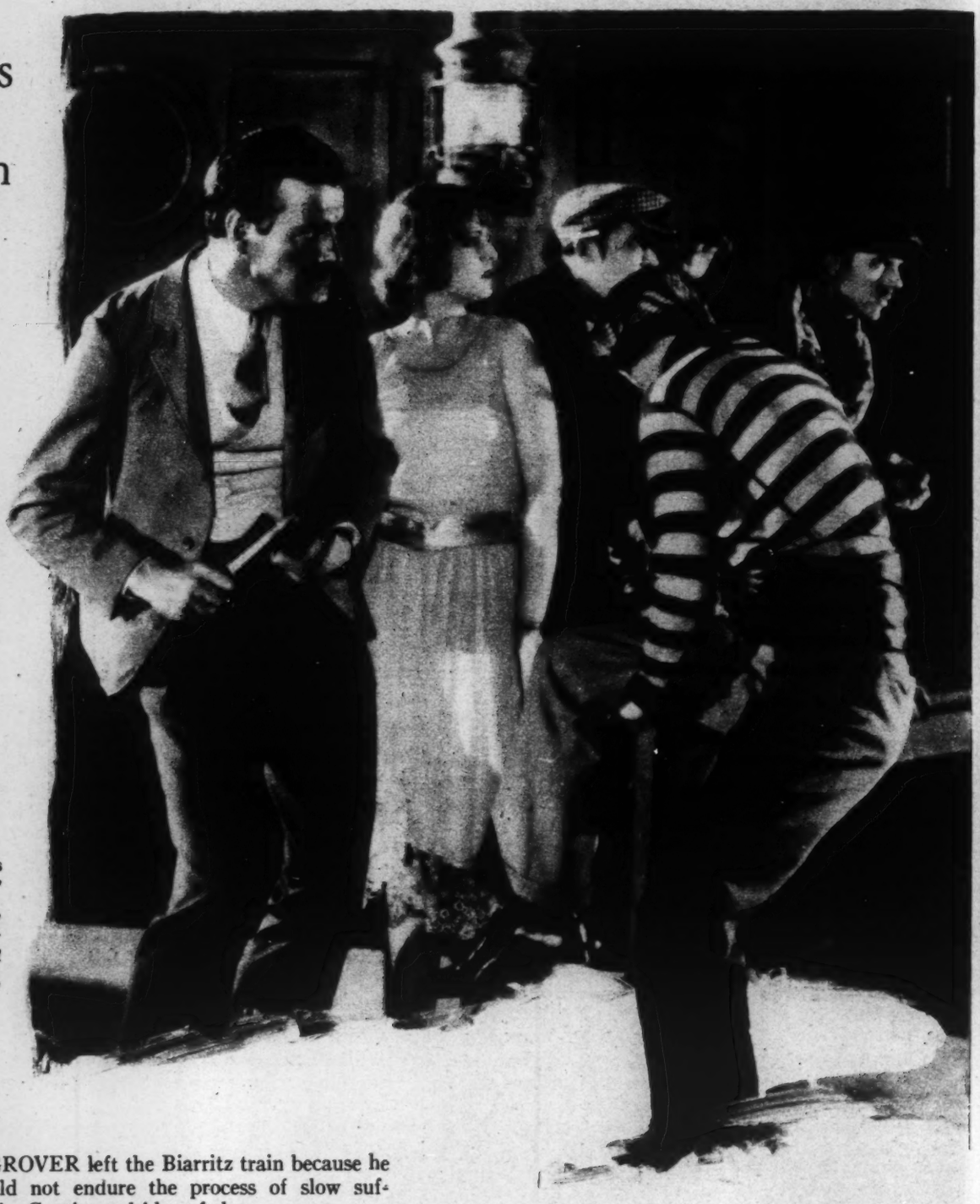
"What, ho, Derry girl! Finished vamping the golden youth? What now?"

"I'm going to bed," returned Derry crossly.

"What? At this ungodly hour? There's going to be a giddy supper party held at [*Continued on page 94*]

The GOSSAMER

By Douglas Newton



"LITTLE guns like these," said the girl, "were my home-town toys... Ah! drop that knife, sonny."

AMBROSE GROVER left the Biarritz train because he simply could not endure the process of slow suffocation that is the Continental idea of sleep.

When the two Frenchmen in his carriage showed signs of settling for the night he had opened the carriage window. Five minutes later the fat, pink one with the green cummerbund shut it.

For forty-two minutes Ambrose tried to doze in an atmosphere becoming more and more like a semi-detached Hades with all modern inconveniences. Then he opened the window again.

Five seconds later the wisp of a man who looked as though he had been shriveled dry by Sahara suns rose. He glared at Ambrose. He also shut the window.

After twenty-nine minutes of griddling in that frowsty atmosphere Ambrose stood up. Both Frenchmen opened one eye and bristled. Ambrose stalked haughtily out into the corridor. After walking up and down the corridor for half an hour he fetched his suitcase and sat on it as near a draft as possible.

He sat on it and told himself he was a fool. He was big, he could speak French like a native, he ought to go back into that compartment, read the riot act and declare the right of man to a mouthful of fresh air. He ought to make a row and enjoy making a row as those Frenchmen would enjoy it. But he was British and he could not do such things. So he just sat and got cricks in his back.

There was something to be said for Ambrose Grover's

GIRL

—when a Man played Knight Errant to the *Wrong* Lady Fair

lack of fight. In addition to his natural national incapacity for throwing his weight about, he was suffering from a rabbit-minded complaint called a Nervous Breakdown. He was on this infernal train because of that complaint. He had been paying too much attention to the buying of linseed. Linseed is a meek sort of article, born to be trodden underfoot in linoleum, but too much concentration on it has the same effect on the mind as Wine, Woman and Song.

In the three past years Ambrose had built up a fortune out of linseed and broken down his health. He had been ordered by a doctor to go to Biarritz for a month and get well. So he had started to obey the doctor—only he never reached Biarritz.

Just when the small of Ambrose's back was feeling its worst the train stopped and spilled him onto the floor. He did not know where he was, and he was past caring, but from the floor he looked through the window at a small, piled-up town, with a romantic looking castle set on top like the decoration of some ambitious wedding-cake. The whole prospect looked adventurous, and more—it looked cool.

As Ambrose got up from the floor he saw the sea too. Between the high-piled and picturesque houses it looked enchanting, flashing in the moonlight and rippling with a breeze that promised freshness.

Perhaps it was the breeze that decided him. Perhaps it was the girl.

Not the big girl but the smaller one who left the train first. She came along towards the door near which he stood like a fairy thing. She looked like gossamer, a bit of femininity spun out of the moonlight that dominated the world outside. She had a pale and perfect oval face, fragile-featured. Her dark eyes glanced at him with shy interest and dropped.

The other girl came along as the first left the train. She was not dainty and French; she was tall, sturdy and free-moving—an English or American girl. She was good looking, very, in a calm steady way. She looked at Ambrose Grover serenely, without shyness and without boldness.

Ambrose had little use for her kind. There had been just such a girl who had been a good "pal" until, startlingly, she had become the good wife of another man. The thing had helped along the Nervous Breakdown. It had happened a year ago, and Ambrose had got over it, but he was still wary of tall, fine girls who looked at one straight in the face.

In any case he gave her no more than a glance for he was watching the little creature of gossamer tripping along the platform. She threw a look at him as he stared from the train, a look that might have been scared or inviting.

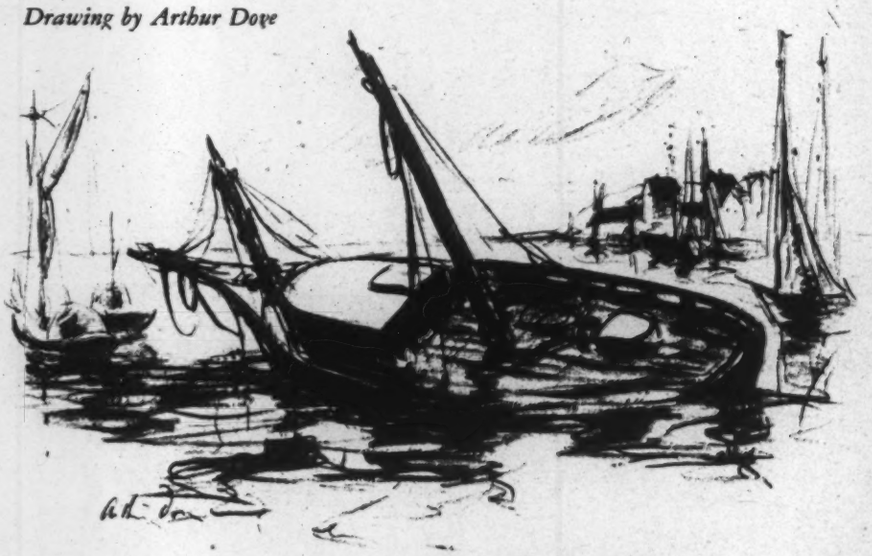
It made her more exquisite and charming. So charming that the thought of living in this town with her intrigued him.

He picked up his suitcase and left the train.

He lost the girl at once because a French railwayman objected very strongly to allowing a traveler to belittle the railway system by alighting before he served out the time on his ticket. When Ambrose had silenced this fellow and got out into the street, there was no sign of a girl of any description. It was, however, but a tiny town, and he must come across her some time, he decided. In any case it was very much cooler than a hermetically sealed train. He lifted his face to the brisk little wind blowing off what he now saw to be a deep-sea estuary, and told himself that life abroad was going to be better than he had anticipated.

A little later his natural diffidence again overwhelmed him and he funked knocking up hotels. The time was considerably after midnight, and the Grand Place of the little town, into which he had penetrated, seemed to be trying to impress him with the fact. There was not a soul abroad in the moonlight, and not one window shining with a lamp. He saw two hotels, but he did not dare disturb the whole town, to say nothing of porters, by hammering on the doors. He simply had not the nerve to wake anybody out of sleep.

Drawing by Arthur Dove



In the dawn the rotting hulk of the ship looked more sinister than ever.

He lied to himself. He said: "I don't suppose I'll sleep anyhow. Too hot. I'll go along and sit down over the water until daylight. Rather an adventure, by Jove!"

He struck out for where the estuary must be, and of course lost himself. He became mixed up in a quarter full of Continental smells and dark, twisting turnings, and went up and went down and in and out until he was ready to drop. When he did come out on the estuary it was well up beyond the little harbor of the town. He found himself on a hillside looking down on a foreshore, which seemed to be the dumping ground for the port's junk, and a pool that was the anchoring ground for decayed ships.

It was a big, circular lake of a place, in which a couple of dozen vessels clustered in an unseemly mass. They ranged from fishing boats to schooners, from dismasted hulks to a couple of battered tramps. Some floated at their moorings, others had rotted through their bottoms and sunk. The moon was so bright upon them that Ambrose could see all this plainly, though the inky huddle of their shadows on the water was confusing in places.

He would have retraced his steps to some place more attractive, but he was too tired. Dropping his suitcase under a tree he sat on it, staring down at the pool and trying to be romantic. He yawned instead.

But he did not go to sleep immediately. While he stared half-dazed, he saw a movement in the shadows under the shore. He looked carefully. There was something creeping over the water, and creeping stealthily. No doubt about that—whatever the craft was it was hugging the shadows.

It slid forward bit by bit, and when it got to the mass of derelict ships it moved out into the pool, using the shadows of the ships for concealment. But the rowboat —as it proved to be—could not hide itself all the time. In passing from the main mass to a huge sunken hulk it had to cross the moonlight. There were four people in that boat, Ambrose saw, and one of them made him gasp. There was a flutter of a gauzy scarf, and the shape of the head meant a feminine hat. It was a woman.

A woman, and for no reason at all Ambrose thought of the gossamer girl. Was it something about her silhouette that reminded him? He stared all eyes and quite alert.

The boat slid into the shadow of the hulk, and was gone. That was all. It did not pass the hulk and it did not return. It was swallowed by the darkness about the big derelict as though swallowed by the mouth of a dragon. Ambrose wanted to think this was queer, but his common sense told him that people often did live on hulks.

Yet, as he stared at the hulk, another thing happened. He thought he heard a woman's cry. He half started up. The cry was not repeated and his national diffidence came into play. He'd probably heard a seabird, and wouldn't he look a fool barging in on some family party on that hulk with the gestures of a rescuer of dames. Just a seabird . . . And people did live on hulks. He sat down again.

Obviously he went to sleep soon after that, for the next thing he took in was dawn. He was looking down upon the pool of dead ships. The sun shone brazenly on it and made it look abominable. It was scummy, and the ships looked beastly in their decay. The big hulk to which the boat had gone looked worse than anything else there. It had sunk and was inclined to one side. It was rotting to pieces. There was even grass growing on its mouldering deck. An impossible place for anybody to live, and yet a boat containing three people and a girl had gone to it. Ambrose stared. Was there something sinister in it after all? Had that cry meant anything?

There was no sign of a rowboat, and this enabled him to convince himself that, if the people had gone to the hulk, they had returned to shore again. They even might have gone beyond the hulk without his seeing . . . He might have slept at once. Anyhow . . .

He leaned forward with sudden excitement.

There was a girl down by the foreshore. She was coming away from the water, and taking good care not to be seen, too, by Jove! It was positively stealthy the way she slipped between piles of junk and looked about to see that she was not observed. Stealthy—that boat last night was stealthy. Was this the woman of the boat? He almost felt a pang as he remembered that he had thought the woman of the boat the gossamer girl. But she could not be stealthy, he was sure.

In a moment he was both relieved and certain that this was the girl of the boat. She stood for a moment upright behind a mound of rusted iron. It was the second girl, the big, cool-eyed one. That girl was capable of stealth. That sort was naturally hard and capable of anything.

He was afraid she might come up to him here, so

he lifted his suitcase and walked back to the Grand Place of the little town. That proved a mistake. Coming out of a bewildering alley he all but ran into her as she came up another. She half stopped and her eyes stared at him with a hard and anxious glance. But in a minute she passed on. Her sort could brazen things out. She turned into the main street—a faint, satiric smile on her strong lips and walked off. He walked after her, at a good distance, and soon lost sight of her.

He didn't mind that. He wanted no sort of contact with that bold type. The gossamer girl with her delicacy, her womanliness was more satisfying. If he never saw the other girl again he would not mind.

BUT he was doomed to see her again. He had not been in his hotel more than a few hours—was just finishing *déjeuner,* in fact, and planning the exploration of the town in search of the gossamer girl—when a *gendarme* politely but firmly asked him to come along to the police bureau.

In that bureau the police behaved in an extraordinary manner. He found himself treated with all the polite ruthlessness with which the French law handles a suspect.

He was cross-examined severely. He had to explain in detail why he had left a train when he was going to Biarritz; what he had done with himself between leaving the train and booking at his hotel; what was his life history—and where were his papers? The natural suspicion they felt at his behavior was not altogether dissipated by the impeccability of his passport and other papers. They treated him a little more like a British lord, but they brought in a detective to see him all the same, a Parisian.

The detective said: "No, I do not know this one," and politeness reigned until a fat *gendarme* said: "Confront the two."

Ambrose Grover was confronted with the big girl.

He was startled to find her there, still cool, capable and able to take care of herself in spite of being in the hands of the police. The fat *gendarme* noted his recognition.

"Ha," he said. "You know this Miss Gundred Kennedy then?"

"I do not," said Ambrose. "I hear her name for the first time, but she did leave the train at the same time as I did."

"Come now," snapped the fat one, "the goose is cooked. Admit you are confederates."

"Don't be silly," said Ambrose. "How can I be a confederate of a lady I have never seen before."

"That is all stuff," was the retort. "We know all about you both. Not confederates, *hein!* It is a strange thing that you both leave the train here so suddenly, though you both have tickets through to Biarritz. You both spend your night in a dubious way. You *monsieur,* sitting under a tree. You *madame,* sitting in the Mount Carmel gardens. You both book at the same hotel. If that is not confederacy——"

"Are confederates then so stupid, *m'sieur?"* asked the girl in her cool, alert manner. Ambrose gave her a grudging admiration as a clever one. He had been too taken aback by the details of her behavior to answer. She had found a joint in the *gendarme's* armor of logic at once. Confederates did not link themselves together so obviously. Practise, no doubt, had made her quick.

He was sure of her now, of course; whatever these police wanted her for she was the culprit. Hadn't she said she was in the Mount Carmel gardens when she had been on that hulk, for hadn't he seen her on the shore after she had landed from that hulk?

The fat *gendarme,* taken aback, rubbed his chin with an audible indication that he had yet to shave. The Parisian detective said impatiently: "But do you identify her at all, gentlemen? If she is the one she belongs here, and you should know her well. This is the headquarters, we are sure."

"No, she is not known," admitted the *gendarme* in charge.

"You say that one you want is a clever one," said the fat official. "There are such things as disguises."

The detective frowned, staring at the girl—studying her. She remained extremely composed, case-hardened, Ambrose thought.

"Is it a fact that another lady got off the train with you *m'sieur?"* the detective asked abruptly.

Into the girl's eyes leapt [*Continued on page 110*]

The girl sat crouching in the boat as he rowed swiftly to the shore.

"SAY IT

WALLACE IRWIN'S

New Humorous Character, *Hen Dall*, Is Funnier than His Famous *Japanese Schoolboy*

"If I'd a-discovered America, I'd

"HEY-Y-Y-Y, HEN! Ya wall-eyed son of a gas pump, snap outa that trance! Hey-y-y, HEN!"

All the windows up the alley, which had shaken with the tonnage of the mighty truck, shook again with the summons of the truckman, a powerful fat man whose face, the shade of his maroon sweater, seemed to be frying in the summer heat. His load of empty pop-bottle crates entirely filled the lane, and in their forward plunge had just knocked down Hen's blue Gargle Oil sign.

"Hello yesself, ya big bum," commented Hen peacefully. As he came around the red pump he was licking an ice-cream cone. He was glad to see Horace Macallister, driver for the Beerless Pop Works. In mutual understanding the two old friends could exchange abuse, and no hard feelings.

"Wunner ya wouldn't knock down the whole alley," shouted Hen. Hen and Horace always yelled at each other like two sea captains talking through megaphones across a heavy storm. "When ya was driving a truck on the Western Front I becha the Joimans stopped the war because it was too dangerous."

"Hellyasay!" volleyed Horace. "Fella that could drive a truck in this alley could drive a Zeppelin down a ant's throat and not scratch its tonsils even. Get me right." His tones were scorching.

The Prince said, "Ripping!"

"Want some gas?" asked Hen Dall, conversationally.

"Wadda ya think I'm here for? A haircut?" Horace got heavily down, violently raised the truck's hood and poked a screw-driver among the spark-plugs. Meanwhile Rollo, Hen's weak-minded assistant, was pumping gasoline.

"Say, Horrus." Hen lowered his voice a trifle. "Dija see them signs of mine along the Main Road?"

"Ya mean them shingles that says FIVE MILES TO HEN'S GARAGE?" asked Horace from the depths.

"Sure. Ain't they a knock-out?" Hen was hopeful.

"Gesso," rumbled Horace. "Five miles to Hen's garage. Know what I thought when I seen 'em? Thought they was advertising a chicken coop. HEN LAYS 'EM FRESH EVERY DAY—that'd be a swell line to go underneath."

"Well, if I laid 'em a tall I'd lay 'em fresh," ventured Hen.

"Fresh is right. I dunno what good them signs is going to do ya. Even if folks wanted to find ya they couldn't do it without a Alpine guide."

"Shut up. Ya give me a headache," said Hen, as gently as possible. "I don't sippose ya know nothing 'bout advertising. That's what's the matter of you, Horrus. Why doncha read the magazines, starting at the back and digging yer way to the front? Whaddaya think would happen to all them wunniful modern inventions if it wasn't fer advertising—air-burning furnaces, artistic linoleum to match the color of yer hair, portiable houses, THE CAR THAT COSTS LESS THAN RENT—where'd they all be, I ask you?"

But Horace, who had found a non-sparking spark-plug, was too busy to reply.

"Mention chickens insteada hens if ya wanna interest the sheiks."

"Yessir, I'm gonna put Hen's Garage on the map," continued the proprietor. "An' whadda I care if it costs a little jack? I done them signs mesself, and it put me back four dollars fer paint alone. Whadda I care? It's results I'm a-looking fer. Next week I'm gonna start a new serial of signs. DO YA KNOW HEN? How's that sound?"

"Rotten," said Horace under the hood. "Wadda ya think

With SIGNS"—

says

THE GAS MAN—

"if ya wanna make folks think about you when they think they're thinkin' about thesselves"

a-hired a double page in all the newspapers."

all them young sheiks driving flivs along the road 's gonna care bout knowing a Hen? If ya mentioned chickens——"

"Ain't ya got any modern cracks?" asked Hen. "I'm a serious man. Publicity. I sippose ya don' know what that means, driving a pop-wagon. And Psychy-ology. Horrus, I'll tell ya what Psychy-ology means so's you'll know whatta say next time a traffic bull bawls y'out fer knocking down a baby buggy. Psychy-ology is the art of making folks think about you when they think they're thinkin' about thesselves.

"Now lookit Cold Cream and Beauty Specialties, frinstance. Sometimes when I'm setting out back, waiting fer customers, I love ta pick up a paper and read them full page ads 'bout HAVE YOU A SKIN LIKE A SWEETHEART? That gits me ta thinking 'bout mesself right away and wondering what I got a skin like. Then I look at the middle of the page, and there's a big photo of Mrs. Algernon van Astormoor all covered with poils and cold cream."

"'Lemme tell ya, goils,' she says, 'all the secrets of my Social Triumps. Last year when I danced with the Prince he looked at my Paris gownd and said, 'Ripping!' 'Goils, d'ya think if I had pimples he would of honored me with them woids? I will tell ya how to exchange pimples fer dimples. Sponge the face lightly with mucilege, rubbing gently away from the ears. If you have a Toikish bath in the house git into it and stay until ya begin ta peel. If not a flatiron'll do almost as good. Now is time to apply Tapioca Magic Cream and Hair Destroyer, using both hands with the thumbs turned slightly in."

Horace Macallister stood up. He rubbed his damp face with the back of his hand, thus exchanging sweat for a long streak of engine soot. "I don't know much about complexion," he said.

"Ya don't read the ads," complained his friend. "Signs is good stuff too, if you woik 'em right. Psychy-ology. Lookit my uncle Rodney Seep. Know what happen ta him? Last Spring he gotta new fliv and started out fer Great Barrington, Mass. Next he knowed he was lost up among them hick farms in the hills. Couldn't find no sign saying TO GREAT BARRINGTON. But after a while he seen one saying TO MIAMI. So he follered them Miami signs clean down ta Florida, he did

"He follered them signs clean down ta Florida."

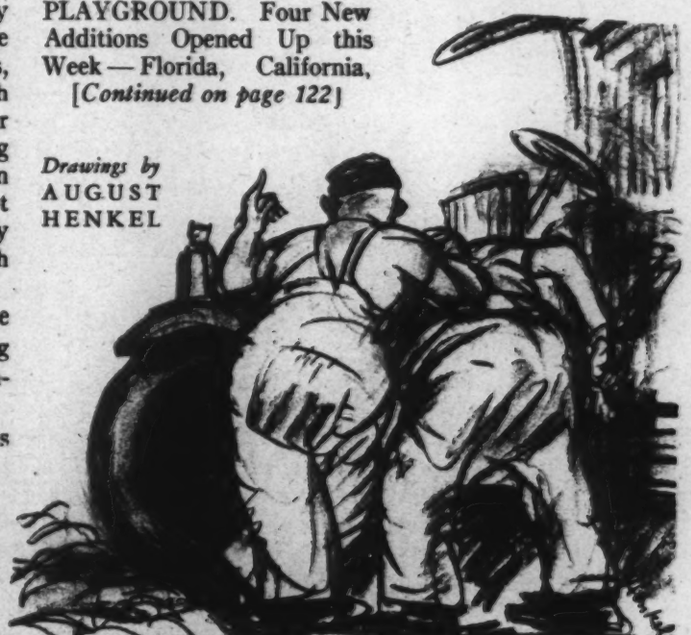
'Because,' says Uncle Rodney, 'if a town's got the kind heart ta show ya the road all the way from Mass ther must be sompn good 'bout it after all.'

"Yessir, ya gotta put the big label on yesself nowadays. Issa fack. It's personality that makes 'em stop and rubber. Lookit Shakspere. No personality. Whacha think of a guy'd let 'em sign his name Bacon jest to get outa the contrack! And so it went till Jack Barrymore come along. Now folks says 'Have ya seen Hamlet by Jack Barrymore?' Some o' them high-hat professors says they never was no such fella as Shakspere. 'Course there wasn't. What paper did he ever advertise in? Tell me that?

"Columbus didn't have no good publicity neither, and if he hadn't discovered so many summer resorts I guess ya never would a-heard of 'im. Cheez! I wisht I'd a-discovered America. I'd a-hired a double page in all the papers and started with a holler. COME TO AMERICA, THE POOR MAN'S PLAYGROUND. Four New Additions Opened Up this Week — Florida, California,

[*Continued on page 122*]

Drawings by AUGUST HENKEL



"Them ads make me wonder what I got a skin like."

By Frank Martin Webber

E PLURIBUS

"The hell you dunno," said the smuggler. "This show is a pay-before-you-enter. Get me?"

YOUNG Joseph Janacki was waiting to be smuggled across the river and into the United States.

A less determined man would have given up, fled in wanton terror from the frigid quiet of the Canadian shore, back to the group of fervid Slavs, his countrymen, who hunched themselves over the roasting oil stove in the road-crew's bunk house.

The afternoon's freezing drizzle had laid a sheath of ice on every limb and twig; the tallow-faced moon lent a misty haze to the border shore beyond; the hard-packed snow crunched beneath the uneasy shifting of Joe's thick-soled boots.

"I dunno," he mumbled, as if arguing against the thing he was here to do.

Back in Prague he had been a gay young swashbuckler, nimble-witted, swift of movement. But once landed in Canada and confronted by the difficulties of the English language his laughing eyes became clouded with a listening look, the buoyant lift of his shoulders gave way to a

UNUM

He didn't talk United States—but he taught an American Girl what it stood for.

"This here picture—my Isadora," Joe said.

puzzled shrug, the powerful swing of his arms slowed to the labored strain of the pick and shovel. Gang foremen shouting orders in abortive English and faced by Joe's troubled eyes called him dumb, and he deliberately furthered the delusion by a monotonous repetition of "I dunno".

The ice-covered twigs on the naked trees cracked like skeleton fingers groping for him in the darkening twilight. He shivered, but not from fear nor any of the things that ordinarily make men tremble. It was from his revulsion at being dishonest.

He blew out his brick-red cheeks. "I dunno," he worried, peering up and down the river. Then, "Isadora," he muttered longingly, his eyes on the shore beyond.

A bough snapped. A footstep on the snow.

"Whatcher do there?" challenged Joe.

"What I do? I do you a good turn, fella. Got the price?"

Joe recognized the oily tones of Nelse Jones, the smuggler, who had insinuated himself into the circle around the road-crew's bunk house stove, interrupting their half-jocund, half-regretful reminiscences of the old country with seductive accounts of what the United States had to offer.

"Me? Got the price? You betcha."

"That's the good word. Shell out."

"I dunno," Joe parried.

"The hell you dunno. Well, I know, see? This here show is a pay-before-you-enter. Git me? You got th' money wit' yer, ain't yer?"

"Me? You betcha."

For a moment each man measured the other. Joe half smiled, knowing that so long as he kept possession of the fee the other would carry out his pledge.

"You'd ruther pay after I git yer acrost?"

"You betcha."

"Say, you got all yer stuff wit' yer, ain't yer? You never kin go back. See?"

"Me? Sure I got everyt'ing."

Nelse dragged a small rowboat from a cache beneath snow-weighted underbrush and slid it onto the strip of near-shore ice. Ominous cracking made both men jerk back uneasily.

"Look out there," Nelse warned, and crouching pushed the boat before him on the thinning ice until it broke through. He expertly dragged it back, breaking a small channel to where Joe waited.

Joe crossed himself reverently before he lifted his big boot over the side and clumsily took his seat in the boat.

They did not talk. Nelse bent low over his oars, cautiously nosing the sturdy craft between slabs of grayish ice.

Joe sat as still as stone, staring at the receding Canadian shore with unseeing eyes. He did not like this sneaking by night through some unguarded point on the border line. He would have preferred entering with heavy honest tread through the open door into the land where happiness was to be attained with round silver dollars, and where work in a motor factory provided upon earth all the blessings of heaven.

Drawing by Arthur Dove

Joe knew now that the man despised him.

And Isadora—Isadora, who had become Dora in Hamtramck, that detached village set down in the side of Detroit and dedicated to labor and liberty for the foreign born— Isadora, who had persuaded Joe to follow her from Prague to America and who had promised her sweet self as reward for his coming.

But in July the flood-gates had been closed against the surging tide pouring into the United States and Joe was one of many excluded by the quota rule. He had resignedly written that he would have to wait six months. But Isadora knew of many men and women who, when excluded by the quota rule, had been smuggled across the Detroit River for the sum of one hundred dollars.

In the beginning her letters had been regular and long, written in their native tongue. They told of her work in the motor plant, her fine wages, her nice room; they told of the opulence of their fellow countrymen, of their automobiles, their high wages, their happiness; they told of good clothes, moving pictures, amusement parks, summer pleasure boats.

With much mouthing and spelling of words Joe read of all these agreeable things, read and resisted, though his heart ached for Isadora and the months lay long and drear before him.

Then the letters grew shorter and less frequent, and no more was said about the fine opportunities for Joe, or of Isadora's loneliness. Joe screwed his gray eyes tight over the flippant recounting of parties, with repeated references to "Ed" and "Eddie."

"Ed and me done this—Eddie and me went there—Eddie was born over here."

And then, "Eddie says I dance as swell as any American girl." This was the thorn that poisoned Joe's clean red blood with jealousy.

That American dancing was why she wasn't writing him! He knew that American dancing, had seen it on the Canadian side. He had often stood outside a dance hall, his massive shoulders blocking a window, while he watched in sheepish curiosity the American dance—the cheek to cheek, breast to breast, thigh to thigh slithering that repelled yet fascinated him. He had always turned away with a vision of his laughing, black-eyed Isadora, her arm linked through a countryman's, whirling, dipping, her skirts billowing about her to the gay music of the native dance.

Now to read—"Eddie says I can dance as swell as any American girl." That would mean that body to body, shut-eyed way that turned his face hot. She couldn't mean that—not Isadora of the twinkling eyes and flashing whirls.

He better go see.

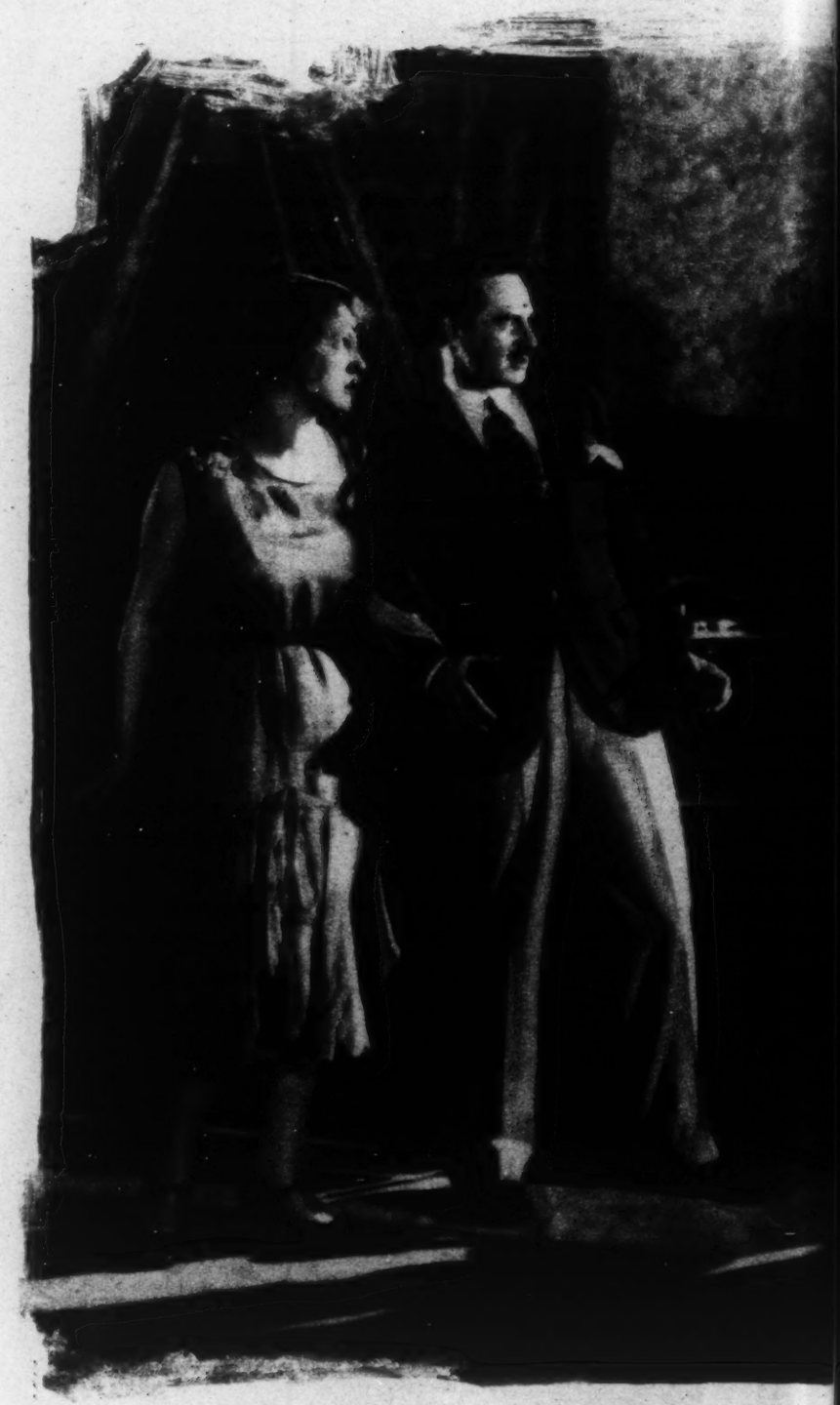
So big Joseph Janacki sat in the rowboat with Nelse Jones, bootlegger in live cargo.

Darkness, stillness, menace—everywhere. Utter silence around the blurred outline of the rowboat in which the two men were but indistinct shadows.

In Joe's pocket was folded a hundred dollars in Canadian bank-notes and gripped tight in his hot palm was a round silver dollar. He had paid three Canadian dollars for it back in Quebec and now it was worn quite smooth from much handling. He had taken it for his scapular of faith in the United States and had come to finger it longer and more often than he did his rosary, muttering over and over "In God We Trust"—which, with repetition, sounded quite as prayerful as so many "Hail Marys."

Nelse Jones rested his oars and producing a pocket light began a series of signal flashes. At a soft whistle the boat shot through the near-shore ice and onto the snow-covered soil of the United States.

When Joseph Janacki first stood upon that soil he scarcely realized it, for his attention was held by a fearful something coming toward him through the dark. It stooped low, knees bent and finger-tips almost brushing the snow—as a gorilla walks. Joe's heart beat with smothering violence. The crouching thing was a man, a hunchback. A sinister omen. Bad luck. Evil eye.



Eddie spun about like a top, his lips curled back

"Pleasant crossing, Nelse?"

"Aw right, chief."

The question came in words as clear and as soft as the whistle which had summoned them. Joe had never heard English words spoken like that, certainly and with every

syllable pronounced. He stooped to make out the other's features between the low-drawn visor of the fur cap and the upturned collar of the great coat, but Nelse pushed forward screening his chief.

"Bein's such a bad night, fella," said Nelse, "and it took two of us to do the job of gittin' yer acrost, it'll now cost yer two hundred instead of one, a hundred to both of us."

"I dunno."

Back somewhere in Joe's agile brain, immediate knowledge of the other's intent came to him. They meant to take all his money, not just the amount agreed upon and which he had ready in an old folder in his pocket. The remainder of his savings, one hundred and ninety dollars, was hidden between the lining and sole of his boot. In his hand he clutched his silver dollar.

Nelse Jones made a swift hipward movement and Joe felt the muzzle of a gun pushing against his ribs. "You shell out. Hand over what yer got wit' yer. Now! See?"

"Me? You betcha." Joe spoke to the one Nelse called "chief." He feared this stooped one far more than he did the gun pushing hard against his side.

Keeping his right hand in the mackinaw pocket ostentatiously guarding the content, he fumbled awkwardly with his left.

"Make it snappy," twanged the nasal order of Nelse.

"You betcha," offering the folder containing the one hundred dollars which was the fixed price for safe passage across.

"Do you understand that we want all the money you have?"

Joe leaned forward to make sure that those low spoken words came from between the cap and the high coat collar. So that was it. He did not answer the gentle question. Boiling with anger, cold with apprehension, his hope caught on a possible subterfuge and hung there. The gun prodded deeper into the thick mackinaw, hurting his ribs.

The stooped one laid ungloved fingers on his arm. "Give over all the money you have at once."

To gain time Joe burst into a volley of Slavic protestation while he meticulously cleared his intention to deceive.

The polite voice cut in, "Stop that jabbering and give us your money or Nelse will kill you and drop you through the ice." The fingers on Joe's right elbow turned to steel pinchers biting into the spot that sent agonizing quivers up his shoulder. Slowly and with eloquent reluctance Joe drew his right hand from his mackinaw pocket. His big blunt fingers opened outward. Both men leaned near and peered at the sweating palm whereon lay a shining silver dollar.

Nelse cursed. The chief chuckled under his breath and Joe shivered under his many layers of clothes. The nipping fingers lay ready at his elbow, but the biting had ceased.

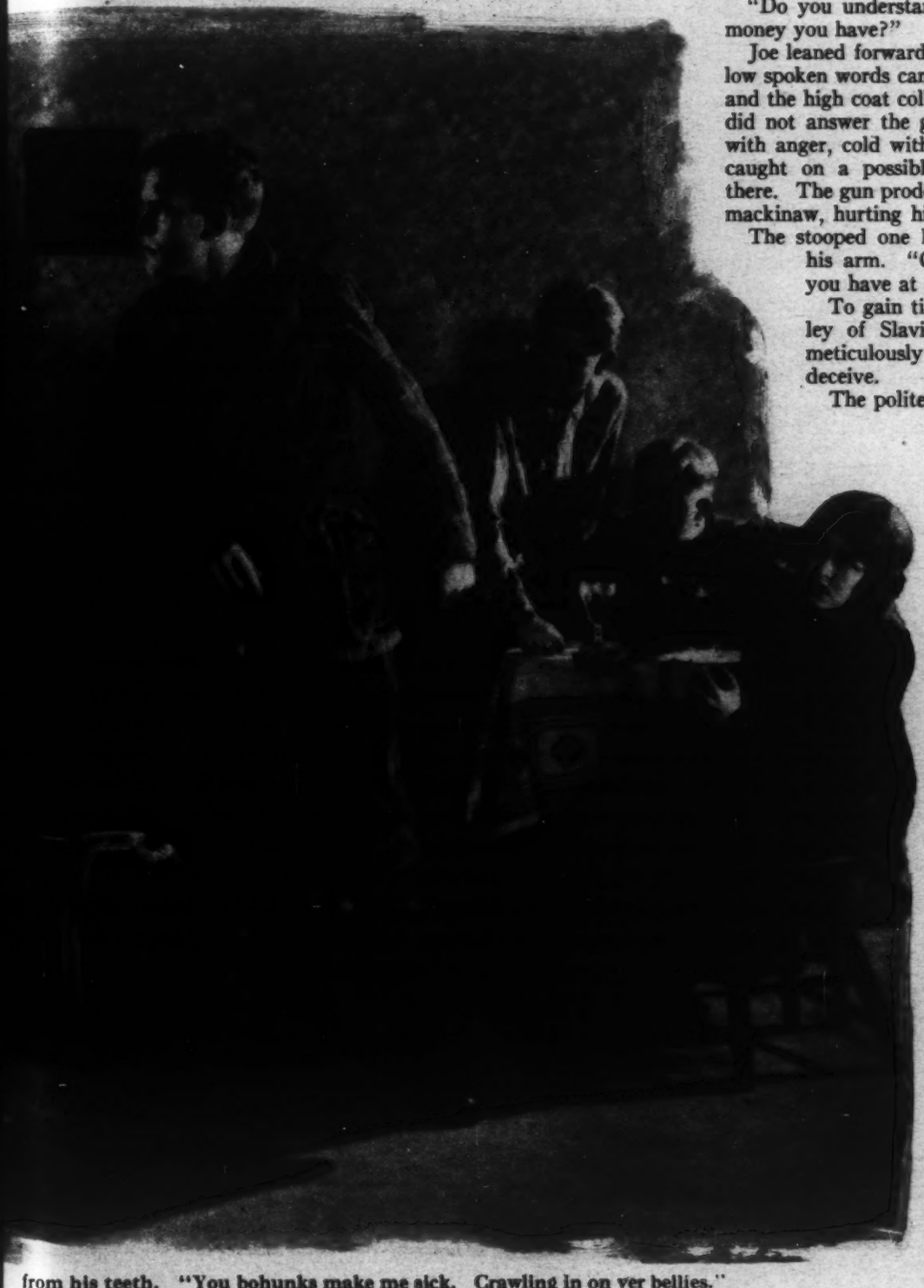
"Put up your luck piece, wop. We want your big money—your wad—your pile—your roll."

Again Joe thrust forward the silver dollar, volubly explaining in his native tongue that this was all he had. Finally with an upward gesture of his big palm he paused and waited.

Nelse spoke: "I don't savvy much heathern lip, chief, but I believe the damn fool has paid his whole pile for this here lousy silver dollar."

"Seems so. We'll go inside."

The steel fingers held to Joe's elbow. They moved along



from his teeth. "You bohunks make me sick. Crawling in on yer bellies."

She stood on the threshold, American girl, all of her, but for the bundle in her hand.

the shore. Nelse snapped, "Walk easy, you fool. Want some federal dick to nab the lot of us?"

The stooped one lurched and would have fallen on the ice had not Joe flung a strong arm about him and set him straight.

The chief murmured, "Thanks." Nelse swore. Neither knew of an old-world superstition that hurt to a hunchback presaged calamity for every beholder.

A few more steps and they stood before a deserted tool house from the roof of which a short black stovepipe pointed crookedly toward the remote moon. Nelse kicked open the small door and shoved Joe before them, still keeping the muzzle of the gun pressed to his side.

Once inside and the door shut, there was the scratch of a match and a tiny yellow flame flared close to the rat-like face of Nelse. He lighted a paper-shrouded oil lamp which hung from the low ceiling. Joe made out a wooden table, two chairs and two rickety stools, some torn magazines, and a pile of rags in the corner, evidently an improvised bed. The one window was hung with old pieces of blanket. The three men sat down in the circle of light.

"Gag and jitsu, chief?"

"Wait."

The stooped one drew a package of cigarets from a pocket, and lighted one between long white fingers.

"How much money have you?"

Joe shrugged. One hunnard ninetee dolla."

"Where?"

The big hand showed the silver coin and Joe again explained with an air of great patience, "I change."

"You lie." Nelse's fingers tightened on his gun.

"None of that Nelse." Then to Joseph, "Do you mean that you gave all your savings for that one coin?" indicating the dollar.

Joe nodded, proud, simple, beaming, determinedly keeping his eyes away from the boot where he had hidden his money. "I tell?" he offered.

"Yes. Please do." The thin lips curved in a whimsical smile.

Joe lumbered to his feet, lids lowered while he swiftly measured the distance from the table to Nelse, at the same time calculating the number of feet between himself and the chief. He shoved his chair back with his heel bringing it nearer to the blanketed window directly behind him. He shifted the silver dollar from the right hand to the left, leaned so that his bent knees were just under the edge of the table.

Tiny plumes of vapor curled from their mouths while Joe explained slowly:

"I change Canada money to United States silver. One hunnard ninetee dolla. Much money. Buy things—much things—in United States. It very good too, for—this here my prayer." The grimy forefinger, broken of nail and cracked of skin, edged the words, "In God We Trust."

"This, my home," indicating "United States of America."

"This big bird—him—fine big bird." He turned the dollar over for more interpretable emblems.

"This here picture—my Isadora," pointing his finger at the woman's head.

"This here, l-i-b-e-r-t-y, libertee." He spelled and spoke the word with reverent awe.

"This—this here," he shrugged, "nobody say, nobody know." The big digit followed the letters of *E Pluribus Unum*, while with guileless eyes he sought knowledge from the chief, he of the white face and misshapen back.

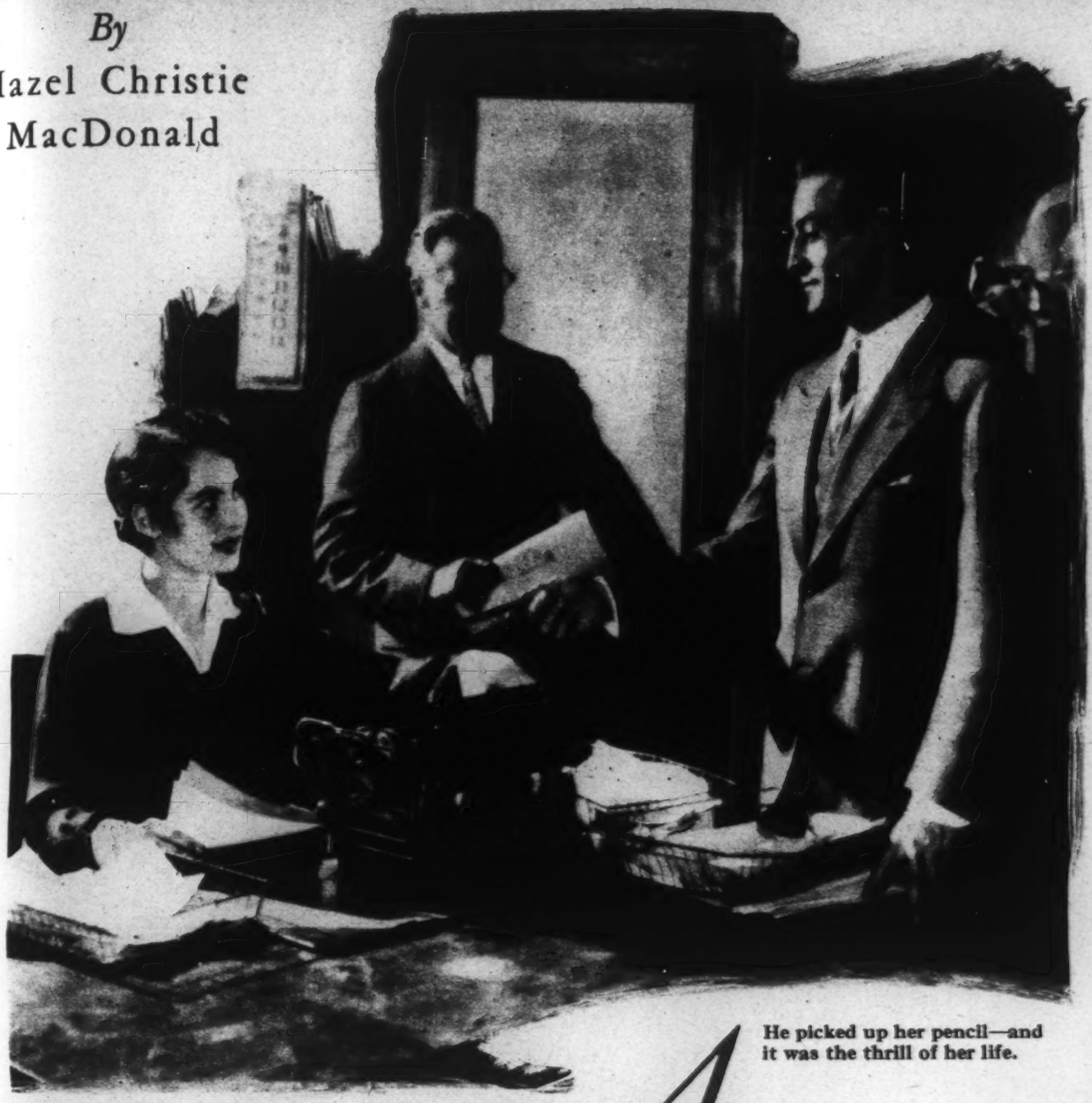
"That, my man, you really should know. To my forefathers—never yours, Nelse, but to mine," he qualified in his dreamy way, flicking the ash from his cigaret—"it meant then, and should mean to you, Joseph, at this particular time—*if you do not first succeed, try, try again.*" He chuckled softly. "They gave a tea party at Boston to demonstrate it."

Joe scratched behind his ear, shifting his boot closer against the leg of the table as he did so. "Not make—try again," he simplified.

"Exactly."

"Fer cripe's sake, chief, are you gonna set here school teaching this fella till a federal cop grabs my collar. You'd git off," Nelse added a trifle [*Continued on page 106*]

By
Hazel Christie
MacDonald



He picked up her pencil—and it was the thrill of her life.

To Be Taken After Meals

The Story of a South African Discoverer and of the Girl who Discovered Him

IN SEPTEMBER, 1925, a very ferocious animal was discovered in the middle of Africa. Now it might be thought that this was a discovery of no importance. But it was, for the animal in question had been believed not to exist.

Besides, in addition to the animal, a brand-new river was unearthed, not to mention a tribe of pigmies, who were pleasantly addicted to putting their enemies into a pot and eating them when sufficiently tender.

There was, however, a great tragedy in connection with the expedition that discovered these wonders. All the members but one perished, and now the lone white survivor, a young man named Roderick MacGregor, was on his way back to New York, with the animals, the pigmies, and photographs taken at risk of life and limb.

Rumors concerning Mr. MacGregor flew before him. It was said he was as handsome as Apollo and that he would give a series of lectures.

At last, on a beautiful October day, the young explorer steamed up the bay, and was met by a special tug containing all those city officials who could get away for the afternoon. The ship reporters rushed on board, and Mr. MacGregor stood revealed to the reading world as an absolute knock-out in light gray! He wore a smile which showed all his perfect teeth, and his eyes were real indigo blue. In short—he was magnificent! The pigmies and the animal were not on view, however, being down in the bowels of the ship where they were enjoying a temperature almost like that of their home town.

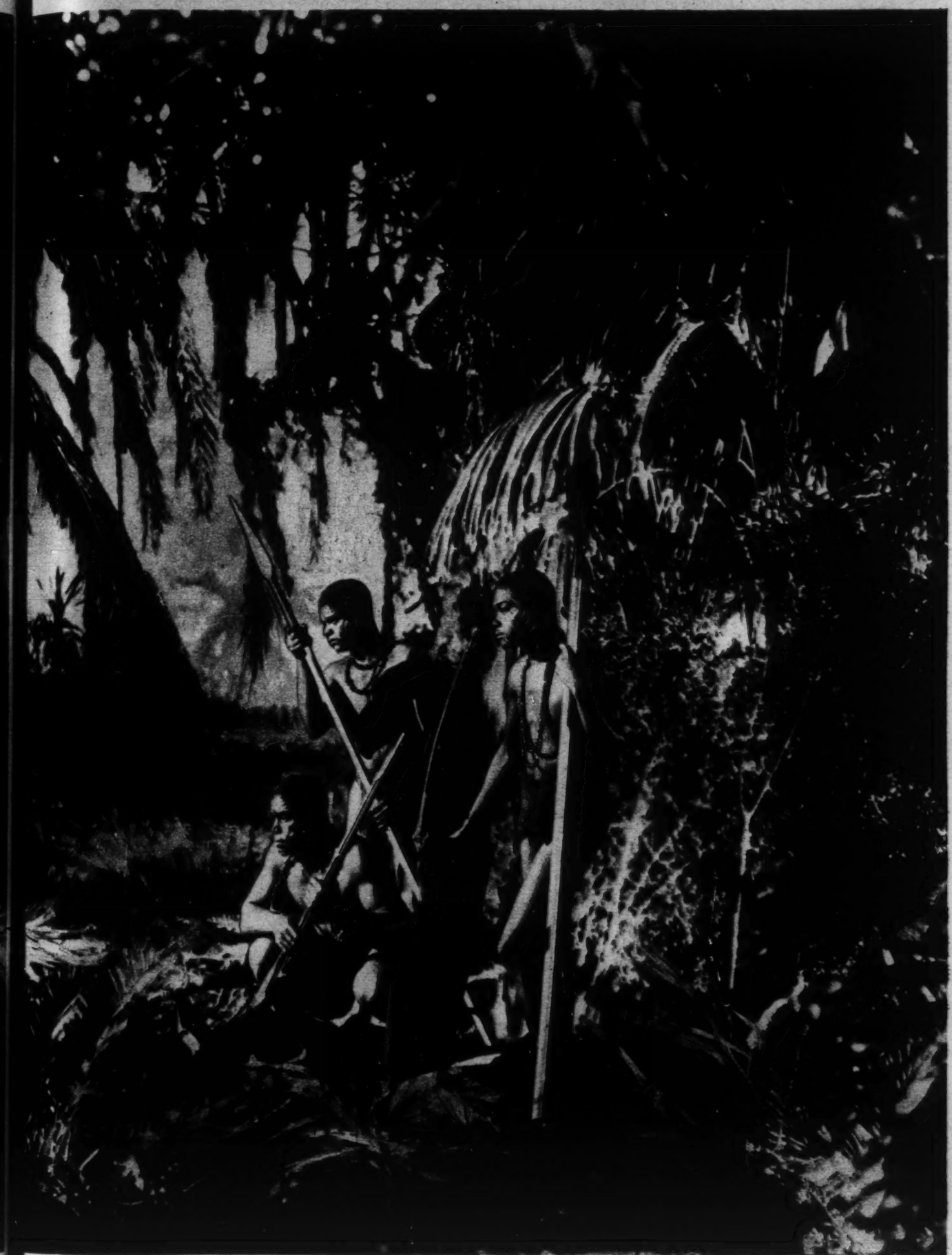
Meanwhile there was a certain organization on West

"It was a terrible four months. And then—Watson died. He made me

47th Street where great authors came and went and little boys ran about with copy. Here the editorial staff grew haggard with the business of trying, each month, to grow a magazine where no magazine had been before.

There was an editor-in-chief and assistant editors; there were secretaries, clerks, typists and compilers. And lastly, there was Miss Barbara Dillon, who earned thirty-five dollars each week for making cryptic marks on long sheets of printed matter called galleys.

Miss Dillon was a nice girl in addition to being beautiful.



promise. And I promised. You do, you know, when a fellow's dying."

She wore little black satin frocks, with white collars and cuffs, and it was whispered that every one of the unmarried editors entertained the most honorable intentions towards her. Nevertheless, she remained unengaged.

And then one day Roderick MacGregor walked into the outer office. His skin was like bronze; he wore custom-built clothes; and the absolute silence that greeted his entrance would have turned the head of a better man.

Miss Dillon stared at him. Then she asked who he was. Then she went out and ate her lunch with the

great problem of her existence solved. Because now she knew why she still was unengaged. She had been waiting all her twenty-four years for Roderick MacGregor!

THE next morning the first instalment of the heart-arresting and blood-chilling tale of the conquest of Africa's mysteries arrived. The editor-in-chief dived into the first page.

"Dynamic—compelling!" he breathed. "Gad—this fellow can write!" The assistant editors, too, broke into exclamations of admiration and joy. By mid-afternoon it was known that Mr. MacGregor, in addition to being better looking than a collar ad, was also a literary wow!

Miss Dillon went about in a rosy dream, which may explain why, on the second day after she first saw Mr. MacGregor, she nearly capsized a young man who was coming up the stairs of her rooming-house as she was coming down.

"I'm so sorry," said Miss Dillon, smiling nicely. The young man gaped at her, and then proceeded to apologize.

"It was all my fault," he said abjectly. "Entirely my fault, I assure you."

Miss Dillon gazed at him. He made her think of Roderick MacGregor. Not that there was the slightest resemblance. Where Roderick was big and brown and bouncing, this miserable specimen looked as if a good breeze would blow him down the street. He had a pale face, and eyes like those of a starved dog.

"It is not your fault at all," said Miss Dillon positively. "I certainly should have looked where I was going."

She continued on downstairs, leaving the young man gazing after her. Then he sighed and continued upward, finding it necessary to hold on to the banister now and then. In the course of events, he gained his own room, which was next to Barbara's, and sat down on the bed as if he were very, very tired.

During the day which followed, Barbara forgot him completely. For one thing, Roderick MacGregor came into the office. He stayed only a minute, but it was wonderful how his smile lingered after he was gone. And the prodigious number of errors that were made by the young ladies in the typing department! Not to mention that Miss Dillon herself took one hour to proof-read one galley.

When she reached home that evening, she met her landlady toiling upstairs with a bowl of broth in her hands.

"It's the lad in the room next to ye," said Mrs. Grogan. "He's sick—and ye should be looking at the arms and legs of him! Like a bird's . . ." Barbara regarded her coldly; arms and legs—well, really! And then Mrs. Grogan opened a door, and Barbara saw, lying against a pillow, the face of the thin young man.

Drawing by Robert Orr

THERE he was, large as life, with the chief wanting to adopt him.

Just at that moment the telephone rang downstairs.

"Devil take it!" exclaimed Mrs. Grogan. "Barbara," she called cheerfully, "I'll be troublin' ye to feed him the soup . . ."

Barbara reluctantly entered the sick room. A moment later, Mrs. Grogan could be heard down on the first floor, yelling lustily into the transmitter. The young man on the bed lay and stared at Barbara with his great eyes.

"It's a shame," he said, "that I should be causing you all this trouble."

"It's no trouble," replied Barbara. "And you're not to talk—you're to eat." She held out a spoonful of the steaming broth, and the young man regarded it sadly.

"It's too hot," objected the young man. "Blow on it."

So Barbara blew on it, and having cooled it, fed it to her patient. At the sixth mouthful, he laid a thin hand on Barbara's.

"No more, please," he whispered, and the girl saw there were beads of perspiration on his forehead. She rose to her feet and her thoughts flew to Mrs. Grogan. But the young man seemed to sense that she was about to leave, and he clutched her skirt.

"Don't go," he muttered, at which Barbara patted his hand reassuringly. Which was a mistake, because the hand at once left off clutching her skirt and clutched her fingers instead. And it was thus they were sitting when Mrs. Grogan came back upstairs. Barbara flashed her an indignant look.

However, this could not go on, so Barbara resolutely unclasped the hot fingers and went away to dress for dinner with one of the four unmarried editors.

Towards one o'clock in the morning she returned. Mrs. Grogan was waiting for her.

"He's been wandering," said Mrs. Grogan, who believed that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points. "And calling—for you!"

"For me!" repeated Barbara in astonishment. "Why, he never laid eyes on me before last Tuesday!"

"Well, it don't seem to make no difference to him," said Mrs. Grogan. "He's been calling for ye like a lost soul. And I had the doctor in, and he says Mr. Tevis is to be humored in everything—everything!"

"Oh," said Barbara, "so his name is Tevis?" She compared it for a moment with the name Roderick MacGregor—compared it and found it wanting.

Having learned Mr. Tevis's name, Barbara now found herself standing at Mr. Tevis's bedside. But this time he

lay tossing restlessly and muttering beneath his breath.

"Barbara!" he said suddenly and distinctly.

"I'm—I'm here," replied Miss Dillon. The young man appeared to be satisfied with this, for he lay quietly for a moment. Then:

"Tanganyika!" he exclaimed. "Tanganyika!"

"What's he saying?" whispered Barbara.

Mrs. Grogan shook her head. "Sure, it's something that's been botherin' him all evening." She sat down solemnly in a rocker. "He's got no relatives, he says—and it would have broke your heart to have seen him when the word hospital was so much as mentioned. So the doctor says I can keep him here, it being one of them slow fevers that don't require great brains on the part of the nurse!"

The next morning Barbara found Mrs. Grogan in Mr. Tevis's room, looking twice as large as life and quaffing coffee. Mr. Tevis looked quite ghastly. Indeed, had it not been for the slight movement of his breathing, you would have said that he was dead.

"He looks half starved," said Barbara from the doorway.

Mrs. Grogan brought her face out of the coffee cup. "And why shouldn't he?" she demanded. "For I do believe it's story writing the lad does for a living. And they all starve, sooner or later." She waved her hand toward a typewriter that stood on a table in the corner.

Barbara looked at the typewriter and then back at poor Mr. Tevis. She shook her head. Because she was afraid she knew the kind of stories he wrote—the kind that age editors prematurely. Poor Mr. Tevis! She sent him a last look and set out for the great office on West 47th Street.

It was during that morning—at twelve minutes after eleven, to be exact—that Miss Dillon experienced the greatest thrill of her life. She spoke in person to Roderick MacGregor! True, the adventure did not last more than twenty seconds, and most people would not have dignified it by the name of adventure. But to Barbara it was tremendous. Of course, Mr. MacGregor had really done nothing more than pick up Miss Dillon's pencil, which obligingly fell to the floor as Mr. MacGregor was passing.

"Please don't bother," said Barbara, who was all blushes.

"Nonsense," retorted Mr. MacGregor. "Picking up this pencil is, at this minute, the most important thing in the world!" And he smiled the smile which so enchanted the Sunday newspaper readers. There was a long and exquisite moment while Mr. MacGregor's fingers touched her own. Then the first editor came out of his sanctum and rushed Roderick inside.

Back at her rooming-house, Barbara paid a little visit to Mr. Tevis. He seemed pathetically glad to see her.

"I'm so glad you're better," said Barbara. "Last night you quite frightened us. You were a little out of your head, you know."

An indescribable expression crept into Mr. Tevis's eyes. "I know," he said. "And that's—what I wanted to—ask you about. What did I say?"

"Say?" repeated Barbara. "Why, you didn't say anything."

"Oh, yes I did," contradicted Mr. Tevis. "A person can't be delirious without saying something!"

"Well, then," confessed Barbara, "you said some word we couldn't understand. You said it twice. And that was all."

"Are you sure?" persisted Mr. Tevis.

"Quite sure," returned Barbara. It did not seem necessary to tell him he had spoken her name. He lay back, considering her gravely.

"Thank you," he said finally. "It must be an awful bore to stand here and talk to me."

"You're mistaken," said Barbara laughing. It was amazing how kindly she felt toward the whole world, since Roderick MacGregor had smiled on her. Foolish? Perhaps. But the fact remained that, fortified by the memory of Roderick's one glance, she willingly would have amused a million Mr. Tevises. There being only one, however, she sat down and proceeded to entertain him. This she did by telling him a great deal about herself—a method suggested by Mr. Tevis.

"And I work in Braithewait's," she finished. "I'm telling you this because you—you write, don't you?" There was a little silence.

"I—I try to," said Mr. Tevis.

"Well, I wish sometime you'd show me something that you've written, will you?" asked Barbara. "And then, if there is anything I can do—I mean, Braithewait's is so large, and they publish some very good magazines—so if there's anything I can do, you understand . . ."

"Thank you," said Mr. Tevis.

The next evening Barbara saw something that Mr. Tevis had written. It was the beginning of a story on which he had been working for some time, he said. It was about a boy and a girl—and it was terrible! Reading it, Barbara felt waves of anguish go through her.

"Of course, I realize that it's only—only in a rough state," said Mr. Tevis watching her.

"Oh, of course," said Barbara. She looked at him and smiled. His eyes were as big as saucers, and his hands like the claws of a bird. Yet here he lay, bravely contemplating such manual labor as the fashioning of fiction.

The next day, Barbara came home in the forenoon. She had a great bundle of proof with her and at Mr. Tevis's request she said she would work in his room. The latter, promoted to a sitting position, sat for half an hour in silent delight, watching this spectacle of a beautiful young woman earning her daily bread. At the end of fifty minutes, however, Mr. Tevis could bear the silence no longer.

"Do you always work this hard?" he inquired.

Barbara looked up. "I'm afraid I don't," she said laughing. "But this is something so unusual—so wonderful—do you know what it is?"

"No," said Mr. Tevis. "What is it?"

Barbara rested her lovely eyes on him. "This," she said gravely, "is Roderick MacGregor's—own story!" She paused to give her listener time to register the proper awe and interest. To her astonishment he did nothing of the kind.

He merely said: "Should I know this MacGregor?"

"Should you know him!" exclaimed Barbara. "Why, everybody is talking about [*Continued on page 78*]

"The $125,000 Marriage License"

USUALLY it costs not more than five dollars for the official little slip of paper the City Fathers issue to the bride and groom. This is the story of a couple who walk into the marriage license bureau to the tune of $125,000—and seem to like it!

It's coming in next month's McCLURE'S, *and it's by a man who has made many friends with his "Friends of Mr. Sweeney" and "The Keys of the City,"*

ELMER DAVIS

Human nature has not changed for the worse.

The New Triangle—the Girl, the Love

By Mrs. M

Dear M. L. W.

You are right on one point, however tangled the other factors of your problem. You should force a decision—force yourself to make one, even if the man is willing to drift. I cannot imagine a more wretched fate than your just drifting. You must choose your course; nobody can do that for you. But perhaps I can help you to follow in your mind your possible roads of decision—each to its logical end.

There are three of these choices, as I see them.

You can give up your love, concentrate all your efforts on putting it out of your mind and life.

You can demand that the man you love do his utmost to obtain his freedom, so that he may marry you.

You can—if he cannot or will not arrange a divorce—commit yourself to a deliberate association outside marriage, with a full understanding of all its implications, dangers, denials, potential tragedy.

Fifty years ago almost any one of whom you asked advice would have seen, or at least suggested, only one of these procedures, the first. But today our complicated economic life brings together young women and older married men in a thousand new and intimate relationships, and the situation has become more common. Human nature has not changed for the worse, but its temptations of opportunity have increased enormously.

It is too late to warn you, but perhaps something may be said to other young women. What I would like to urge on each of them is simply not to "go it blind." For isn't it merely conforming to the self-preservation which is nature's first law, for a girl to put up the "stop" signal *before,* not *after,* such love steals upon her?

Still, the signal may be lifted, even when she has reached your present position. It is humanly possible for you to give up the man you love, definitely and irrevocably. You will suffer, but you need not feel that your life is ruined.

If you are not already familiar with it, read the life of the New England poet, Emily Dickinson, written by her niece, Martha Dickinson Bianchi. Emily Dickinson, as a young, lovely, gifted woman, fell in love with a married man and he with her. As soon as she realized what had happened, she rushed away from him and they remained a lifetime apart. Emily Dickinson never married. But her story shiningly proves that adherence to the old standards of morality need not destroy [*Continued on page 76*]

By The Love

TWO authorities in sociological common sense—a woman and a man of standing in their professions—have been commissioned by McClure's to study each month a single problem selected from those submitted by readers. These experts are unknown to each other, so that the woman's side of the question may be contrasted impartially with the man's. As evidence of good faith, all letters sent to McClure's, 119 West 40th Street, New York, must bear the writer's name and address. Under no circumstances, however, will names be disclosed, even to the two principals.

Dear Madam and Sir:

I have been reading your excellent discussions, and have come to the conclusion that you can undoubtedly advise me.

I am in love with a married man.

What else need I say save that? Yet there is so much I want to say, not in apology but in explanation. If only I were not so sure that my feeling for him is love!

I first met him when I was transferred to another department in the offices where we are both employed. Since then, and only quite recently, we have been separated again.

Our first meeting was little less than a year ago, but with each successive month I realize more and more how much he means to me. Like any girl I have had many puppy loves before. I know the real thing now that it has come to me; I know it and I am glad even though he is married already.

After that first exchange of greetings our friendship grew and before either of us realized it, he knew my history and I his. I also knew that he was not happily married and that his wife's beauty had been her chief attraction for him. He had married her upon impulse, and to crush her other admirers. She does not understand him; her soul and his are alien. I know it is generally believed that people who term themselves soul-mates are ridiculous fools with too much imagination, but I am not one of these.

But temptations have increased enormously.

the Office, and the Married Man Doctors

By Mr. H

Before either of us realized it he was coming to me for suggestions and praise or criticism of his really remarkable sketches and paintings, an ambition of which his wife thoroughly disapproved and termed him eccentric for liking. And I was equally as confident in his estimate of my poetry, which I was under contract to supply to a popular magazine.

Little gallantries, sincerely spoken flatteries, the numerous tender flashes of his eyes—I began to take them for granted. We were such good comrades it did not actually occur to me that our happiness could not continue forever. But the break did come eventually. My scheduled time in his department elapsed and I returned to my old position. There is the mere distance of one flight of stairs between us, but the companionable friendship has been practically discontinued because people about the office were making contemptible remarks about us, and especially about me.

It has finally developed that we see each other only once a week, on Sundays when h sings in the choir of a D—— church. He is the leader of the choir and often sings alone. When he is finished he invariably smiles at me and I return the recognition.

He loves me, and I love him. Perhaps he is right in being loyal to his wife. Morally he is, of course. But what of me? I am not to blame for loving him. I have not purposely chosen to love him; in fact I have deliberately tried not to. If he were the father of children I know I would not feel as I do about him, but he is not. In bygone days good men had more than one wife, and the wives were also indisputably good women. What difference does it make if we are happy? What is compulsory about benefit of clergy?

I am no flirt. In judging me remember that. I am not particularly pretty; I haven't even an especially attractive personality to any one but him. We are truly affinities, I believe—if I may use a shopworn word for want of a better one.

I suppose I must admit in all honesty that I want you to tell me I am justified in trying to force a climax to our little drama. Tell me it is no crime to love too well, and tell me he is wrong in his attitude toward the wife he does not love. Tell me how to straighten the tangle. Tell me anything but that he is wrong and I am more so, or that our friendship is not true love. It is advice on how to force a decision one way or the other that I want and not comment upon my immorality or lack of self-control.

M. L. W.

My dear M. L. W.

Your case is not an unusual one, but it is for that reason no less interesting or capable of tragedy than if it had never happened before. The reason for both interest and tragedy lies in the fact that there is not just one person's happiness involved; solved in whatever way we please it is scarcely possible that satisfaction and happiness can come to all three concerned.

Now what first strikes me about the situation you describe is this: It lies in your hands, and in yours only.

Have no doubt of that. Because this man is in love with you, you can do what you want with him. You can, if you please, change the loyalty which now holds him to his wife into a loyalty towards his love.

Let us consider these three persons of your drama in turn. First the wife—your chief count would seem to lie in her lack of imagination and want of sympathy toward her husband. These be grievous faults, but they do not necessarily imply for their possessor any original attempt to deceive when she married. At least she gave to her husband herself and the beauty which attracted him, and relinquished other admirers when she did so. Let us admit that to this extent she seems to have done her job. Will she consent to a divorce? A Roman Catholic or a Catholic Anglican would refuse, and it seems to me that even others of less strict views might question the justice of divorce in such a case.

Now the husband. I picture him with all the attraction which an artistic nature so often exhibits, but I see him not so strong as he is lovable and attractive. I must confess I don't like those invariable smiles when he has finished singing. Somehow—I may be unjust—the situation seems to me too serious a one for smiles. I know it is entirely serious to yourself. Are you sure it is equally so to him? Is he a man of fixed convictions? Is he confirmed in his belief that you two are really united by a love unlike any he has experienced before?

To me it seems at least questionable whether the step you are considering—which, as I have said, you can persuade the man to take with you—would bring him happiness in the long run. Isn't it taking a pretty long shot to suppose it necessarily would? If after a time your own love remains and his disappears—as it apparently did in the case of his wife—then you and he will be even less happy than you are now. I have stressed the power you hold. Let me now add the fact of the responsibility that

power carries. It is you who will have decided on his transference of loyalty, and should he come to regret it he will never forget on whom the decision rested. And be sure that should this happen you will never convince him that he himself bore any share in the responsibility of decision.

And finally yourself—the most interesting part of the problem. You strike me as an honest and a courageous person.

Well, if I see right, you hold the cards in your hands. The question is: how are you going to play them? There are evidently just three possible plays: Love after divorce. Love without divorce. Renunciation.

You are for one or the other of the first two. Since I have already touched on divorce let us consider the second. I am particularly trying to avoid that "comment on your immorality" which you explain you don't want. But call it morals, ethics or what you will, we can't get away from a responsibility for our conduct. I remember a friend of mine who, under the impact of a staggering blow, told me how, when all the old sanctions and solaces had failed him, the only thing left was just this: be a sport! For many a man and woman this is the first and only commandment. *Be a sport!*

Now I can't say that to take this man from his wife would be unsportsmanlike, but I'm rather inclined to think it would be. Unsportsmanlike toward the wife because she doesn't want and hasn't really deserved it. Not playing the game toward the man because you stand a good chance of hurting him.

We will waive the point of whether polygamy is ethically allowable; I content myself with declaring it is socially impractical. I am speaking of conditions in our own country. What do I mean? I mean that the leader of the choir would soon have a swarm of gossipy rumors buzzing about his head. I mean that the buzzing would make him resign this and analogous positions. Moreover this man is evidently a sociable fellow who likes intercourse with his kind. Are you sure you can compensate him for the inevitable loss?

There remains renunciation, a word with a confessedly dismal sound which at first sight seems the negation of everything adventurous, desirable and positive. But wait a moment! The renunciation I mean *is* a positive thing. Your work happens to be creation: poetry. Surely you can find in ambition, in self-realization, in that expression of personality in art which you as an artist must know, a means of transmuting your love into something which is for others less harmful, and which for yourself is no less practical and no less passionate.

Well, there's my advice, and having given it, I feel what the adviser of unwelcome things is apt to feel, keen regret that I have been unable to couch it more persuasively.

You hold the trumps. Play a lone hand! Then you can't make others lose. And you'll win yourself. Try it!

Mrs. M

—Continued from page 74

happiness nor prohibit achievement.

You must play fair, however. You must not cheat yourself, nor allow your lover to cheat you, with half measures. Besides eliminating the man from your outer life, you must try to eliminate from your inner life the love you feel for him.

Meanwhile, it is true that you will have many bad half-hours, and more than one modern woman, in your position, tries to escape them by following the second of the three possible courses I have indicated.

"Why," she argues, "should three people be wretched? There are no children to whom either of you owes a duty. Whatever stigma is involved in the divorce will rest on you, perhaps on me. Certainly no one will blame your wife. You can make proper financial provision for her. As for 'loyalty,' can you be any more disloyal than you already are if you feel toward me as you say you do?"

Such a point of view presupposes that no one of the three involved takes the view of marriage held by at least two large religious sects. But that view is not held by many other decent American citizens—let us admit it. Let us also admit that not a few American marriages are dissolved, and that the re-shuffled husbands and wives not infrequently seem to be happier and more useful persons than they were before. But let us also admit that such marriages start with an enormous handicap which as a rule can be overcome only by both persons involved possessing extraordinary strength of character.

And now to the third possible course:

"What is compulsory about benefit of clergy?" you demand. "Tell me it is no crime to love too well."

I might repeat all the usual arguments, but I doubt that you, or most women deeply in love, are in the mood to listen to logic.

Therefore, I shall simply tell you three true stories of women who thought they could find happiness by loving and living outside the law.

One beautiful and cultivated woman tried the experiment with a man whose wife would not divorce him. She had two lovely children, but when she realized that she was again about to become a mother she poisoned herself and them, leaving a pitiful message that there was no place in the world for any of them.

A second couple could not marry because the man felt he should not jeopardize the social position of his children. These two people lived together for a number of years but in the end they resorted to residence in different countries to avoid humiliating complications.

The third woman who loved a man whose wife would not divorce him went to a large city and there kept herself free for such times as her lover could be with her. Too proud to be entertained by women who would cut her if they knew of her love affair, she withheld herself from all social contacts for eight years.

Then the wife died. After a decent interval the widower married the woman he had loved for eight years. But those eight years of loneliness, anxiety, rebellion, defencelessness, haggard hopelessness, have left lines on the woman's face, scars on her heart. She took a long, long chance on happiness. Do you honestly think her chance is worth taking?

Sax Appeal

—Continued from page 48

Walt," argued Smoke. "I don't get you. We know our stuff. Besides," he added grinning, "you could pretty near have done it, just with the saxes."

"Smoke," said Walt, "this orchestra is going to have something more than a sax appeal. When our music hits the ether, all the planets are going to start fox-trotting around their orbits."

Smoke laughed.

"Well," mumbled Cecil Leedy, "if we're not in shape, why aren't we? Why didn't we practice mornings, instead of just a couple of hours, in the afternoon?"

"You said a jaw full," Klaw agreed. "That money would have come in handy, right now."

"All right," Walt rejoined smiling. "We're starting at the Belbadore a week from Thursday. We'll be ready by then."

Smoke and Walt quit their work at the Sylvan Glade, so as to have time for intensive practice, and most of the other boys gave up their various jobs.

They started early, with Walt working in new effects for each number. They tried "June Night Moonlight," and went over "Serenadin' Sarah" a couple of times, and then began "On the River Boat." But just when they reached the chorus, another man came in, and Walt stopped them to talk with him.

The newcomer was Mr. Hudson, assistant manager of the Belbadore.

"I tried to phone you a couple of times last week," he said. "Tuesday afternoon, and Thursday night. Nobody answered."

"I was out," Walt explained quietly.

"Well, no matter," said Mr. Hudson. "I guess you already know about the little delay."

"Delay? What?"

"Why, the fixtures. Some of them haven't arrived yet. So we're postponing the opening."

"Is that so?" Walt had turned pale, but was trying to hide his concern. "When— About how long?"

"Oh, two or three weeks."

There was a tense silence among the players in the room. A chair creaked, as some one shifted his weight. Walt and Mr. Hudson moved out through the door together.

There were exclamations from all of the fellows.

"Well, what do you know about that!"

"And I've already quit my job, too!"

"We'd have known last week," growled Klaw, from behind his drums. "Only Mr. Folwell wasn't here to answer the phone. He was out with his henna-haired girl."

"Yes, and she gives me a pain," said Martin Burns, one of the saxophone players. "She thinks she's the cat's sonata."

In a few minutes Walt returned. He was white and worried.

"Well, fellows," he said, "this is tough, isn't it?"

"Look here. I can't lay around for three weeks!" declared Leedy.

"Hey, what are you talking about?" snapped Klaw. "We get paid from Thursday night. Isn't that our agreement with Folwell? Belbadore or no Belbadore. Hey, Folwell?" He glared at Walt for an answer.

"Yes," said Walt quietly. "That's right, Purdy."

He and Smoke walked to the subway together.

"I'm up against it," Walt confessed. "Don't know how I'm going to raise the money. I wish I had what I've spent at these night clubs."

"Listen, Walt. You know I'd help if I could. But I'm in the same fix. See?"

It was a gloomy night for them, and the next day was worse. Now that things had started slipping, they seemed to gather momentum. When Walt admitted his straits, Purdy Klaw refused to practice any more. Then Cecil Leedy quit, to go back to his former job.

Although the situation was generally known, nobody around the Sylvan Glade mentioned it when Walt and Smoke dropped in. The next day Walt was back at his futile efforts to raise money. Martin Burns met him, and said that he had been offered another job. Burns said he hated to be a quitter, but he could not afford to take a chance for three weeks.

"You know how it is," he concluded.

"I know," Walt replied. "It'll be the same with the others. If I can't scare up the money, we're sunk."

He went to the practice hall, to think. He sat there with his elbows on his knees, and his head in his hands. Things could not have looked much darker, when Smoke dashed in, panting.

"Hey, call the fellows!" he gulped, perspiring and out of breath. "Call 'em! I'll have the money."

Walt jumped up. "What? Smoke! How can you get it? Where from?"

"Say! Never mind where from. I can't tell you. I'll have it. Get me? Eight hundred dollars. Get the fellows. All of 'em. We'll show the world. Hot baby!"

THE Belbadore fern room was filled to its last table on the opening night. Walt sat fingering the keys of a shimmering, silvered saxophone. Smoke bent forward in his chair and whispered to him.

"Hey, isn't she coming?"

"No," Walt replied, with a flicker of a smile that might have indicated any sort of feelings.

Smoke sat back silently, looking slightly surprised. There was really no cause for astonishment, however, as Lisette's absence was quite natural. A young real estate man, who had been giving her a great deal of attention for a couple of weeks, had asked her to go with him to the Club Nowater. The real estate man had a car and quite a showing of money, while as Walt himself had admitted, the success of the orchestra venture was still uncertain.

Walt's smile may have meant that he understood the situation; it was hard to tell. He walked out in front with his sax, and started the orchestra on "June Night Moonlight." The long open space in the center of the room was crowded with dancers. When the music stopped they applauded vigorously.

The enthusiasm seemed to advance with each number that was played. When they came to "Serenadin' Sarah," Walt moved off to the side, and Smoke strolled to the front with his banjo. All the lights were switched off, except the little shaded lamps over the individual tables, and a spotlight was aimed at Smoke. Out of the darkness came the notes of Walt's saxophone, distinct from the other instruments, somehow strengthening the suggestion of a love song under a shadowy balcony. There was prolonged applause after this number, and it was encored three times.

As they put down their instruments afterwards, Walt suddenly nudged Smoke.

"Doesn't that look like Ruth over there?" he whispered. "At that table 'way over in the corner. Behind those ferns."

Smoke glanced in that direction and then back at Walt, and nodded without saying anything.

A kind of bitter smile slipped over Walt's face.

"I guess she came expecting to watch me flop," he mumbled.

Smoke replied quickly. "No, she didn't. I don't think so."

And then it was time for the next piece. The orchestra seemed to improve as it played. Two or three applause telegrams were received from radio listeners. The dancers lingered on the floor more persistently after each piece, insisting on encores. But the number which took their breath away was "On the River Boat."

The orchestra boys donned boatmen's caps, and Walt stood out in front, directing them by motions with a big wheel, like the pilot wheel of a boat. The lights were turned low again, and instead of a spotlight, a suffused, bluish glow was thrown upon the front part of the orchestra platform.

These attempted illusions might have evoked only laughter, if it had not been for the music. But if you had tuned in on that music in the middle of the Sahara desert, you could still have imagined that you heard the paddles, and the muffled rhythm of an engine, and the slapping of water against the boat, all turned to melody, and syncopated.

Before the encores were over, the receiving set audience was telephoning congratulations. When the telegrams started coming, they had to be brought in in baskets.

Walt had apparently hit the thing that was wanted. Of course lots of other orchestras had tried almost the same plan, but he just seemed to have been lucky.

WALT and Smoke met early the next afternoon.

"Say. There's something I wanted to tell you last night," Smoke began. "But there was such a mob around."

"Yes?" said Walt, dully.

In spite of his success, he was downcast, as any fellow would be, if he thought he had lost a girl like Lisette. Smoke saw how he felt, and so postponed whatever it was that he had to tell Walt, and tried to cheer him first.

"Don't let it worry you," he advised. "Even if she wasn't there last night——"

"I'm not thinking of Lisette," said Walt. "It's Ruth. Who was the old fellow she was with? I wonder if that's the one she stood me up for?"

Smoke shook his head in dumb amazement. Then he answered, "That was her father." He hesitated, and turned red, and began to stammer, as if he had something to say which he did not know how to put into words.

"I wanted to tell you," he struggled. "That date—you know—that date she said she had—see—she didn't have any date. No. Just wanted you to put more time on practice. Say——"

Walt had bolted for a telephone.

"Wait!" called Smoke, following him. "We're to meet her at the Sylvan Glade. In about thirty minutes."

But Walt would not wait, so they started over in a taxi. About a block from their destination, they were halted in the traffic, and Walt threw a bill into Smoke's lap, to pay the fare, and jumped out and started running.

There was to be an afternoon dance at the Sylvan Glade, but it was still so early that the place was almost empty. Walt saw Ruth alone in the parlor, and hurried toward her.

Lisette intercepted him just in the doorway however, and began to congratulate him on his great success.

"Ha!" she greeted him. "I hear you're the cat's tonsils."

Walt replied, "Thanks," and gazed at her rather coolly. Now Lisette was such a classy girl that she was not ever beholden to any one fellow. Also the real estate man was due in a little while. So she turned to go, remarking pleasantly, with a glance at Ruth:

"You won't need me now. You can get all the girls you want. Treat him nice, Ruthie. Because he's famous."

And she walked away.

Walt looked at Ruth. In spite of all her shortcomings, it could not be denied that she was strikingly pretty, with her steady blue eyes, and a little flush of color rising in her cheeks.

Walt took a hesitant step toward her, and began to say silly things.

"I'm sorry. You know I am. All I've been doing is thinking about you, and being sorry."

He caught hold of her hand, but she pulled it away. Whatever her original intentions may have been, in arranging to meet Walt, they were effectually blocked

by Lisette's clever hint that she had waited until everything had turned out hotsy-totsy.

"Listen Ruth," he pleaded. "I'm sorry. I mean it. I—I care a lot about you. Always have. Even when I've been with another girl, I couldn't stop wanting you. And you care a little, too, don't you? When we quarreled, you were sorry a little, weren't you? At least a little?"

She retreated another step. "I never even thought of you," she said.

Smoke had come in quietly while they talked. "Hey, what do you mean, you never thought of him?" he demanded. "What about this?" He dug into an inside pocket, and held up a pawn ticket, crowded with writing.

"Smoke Lewis!" Ruth cried. "Give that to me! This minute! You know your promise!"

But you can understand how Smoke felt. Regardless of having promised not to mention this part of the affair, he did not wish to see his pal go on talking as he had been, in the belief that Ruth had not thought of him. So he handed the ticket to Walt.

"Listen. Where do you think that eight hundred dollars came from?" he blurted. "Hey? This girl, she comes to me that day, and offers to help. She has three hundred in the bank. See? And a bunch of jewelry that I soak for five hundred. And now she says she never thought of you. Ha, ha! Apple sauce!"

Walt altogether missed the humor of the situation.

"Ruth!" he said. "You do still care. Ruth!"

He grasped both her arms and would not release them when she struggled. And then she flushed crimson, and the blue of her eyes appeared to melt, and she put her face against his shoulder—and began to cry!

After all, it was what might have been expected from a girl of that helpless, dependent type. Smoke turned and walked away, disgusted.

Lisette would never have made such a scene.

To Be Taken After Meals

—Continued from page 73

him. He's the man that went to Africa!"

"Did he?" asked Mr. Tevis. "What did he go for?"

Barbara put down her pencil and reminded herself that he was a very sick man, and therefore not accountable. This being the case, she explained patiently just who and what the World's Prize Male was.

Mr. Tevis lay silent for a moment. Finally he spoke.

"I—don't—like his name!" he said definitely.

"His name!" exclaimed Miss Dillon. "Why, his name is lovely!" And then she added: "Besides, he's so handsome!"

"That's it!" said Mr. Tevis crossly. "That's why you like him. If he just had a nice, plain, serviceable face, you wouldn't like him at all. And you know it."

Barbara laughed.

"Maybe you're right," she said. "But he has a lovely mind, too. You can see it in his eyes. The eyes of a man of courage!" Mr. Tevis groaned.

"He has a splendid body," said Barbara, who did not like to hear Roderick MacGregor groaned at. "Can't you admire that?"

Mr. Tevis made a face. "I'm afraid I can't. You see, I've been sick all my life."

Barbara looked at him, and Bill Tevis smiled ruefully.

"In short, I'm everything that Roderick MacGregor is not," he finished.

Barbara looked out the window. "Well, you mustn't feel badly about it," she said. "Because after all, you know, very few men could expect to be quite like Mr. MacGregor. He's—he's—well, there just aren't any more like him."

"I suppose not," said Bill Tevis, and a sort of leaden despair began to creep into his poor heart.

The next day the patient was more cheerful, but he also seemed weaker. Barbara, back from the office at ten, with a new pile of proof, was just in time to feed him his gruel, and she fed him the latest about Mr. MacGregor along with it.

"Mr. MacGregor has been called out of town, we learned this morning," she said, "and our editor is pretty upset—he hates to let an author get away from him in the middle of anything as important as this book, you know . . ." She stopped, because Mr. Tevis was pushing away the gruel bowl with both hands.

"I'm going—to—get up!" he said.

"Get up!" cried Barbara. "Get up!"

"Yes," replied the patient. "I can't stay in bed for the rest of my life, can I?" And then Mrs. Grogan came in.

"Sure—an' I'll haul ye out of the covers and spank ye!" she told him when she learned what he had threatened. So they bullied him into docility, and when they left him that evening at seven, he was lying looking at the ceiling.

There was absolutely nothing to prepare them for what was to happen that night. At half past ten, Mrs. Grogan, who had been to call on a friend, returned to find Bill Tevis, fully dressed and in a dead faint on the floor outside his room. Mrs. Grogan screamed once, picked him up and in five minutes had him back in bed. The doctor came and once more reclaimed Bill Tevis.

At twelve o'clock the doctor, Mrs. Grogan and Barbara, who had come in just a few moments before, knew that Bill Tevis would live. But what they did not know was that Bill Tevis actually had been out!

All through the hours of the next day Barbara was troubled by the memory of that white and exhausted face. But at evening she came home radiant. She flung herself up the stairs and knocked at Bill Tevis's door, then pushed it open.

"Oh," she exclaimed breathlessly, "you'll never guess what has happened!"

"I suppose not," said poor Mr. Tevis. "What has happened?"

"Mr. MacGregor came in this morning. It seems he found out he didn't have to leave town after all. And he has invited me to attend his lecture—*as his guest!*" She gazed at Bill Tevis with eyes like stars. "And after the lecture," she continued, "we're going some place for supper—and perhaps to dance!" There was silence.

"Well," asked Barbara at last, "why don't you say something?"

"I'm just trying to decide what to say," said Bill Tevis. "But I suppose I might ask—if you're happy and all that?"

Barbara laughed. And although she never answered the question Mr. Tevis must have known whether she was or not, for after she was gone he burrowed his head very hard into his pillow.

THE billboards announcing Mr. MacGregor's first lecture went up on a Monday, and Mr. MacGregor sent Barbara a rather long note, reminding her of her promise to be his guest at his first lecture. Merciful heavens! As though she needed any reminding! Meantime it was odd what a vast amount of pains Barbara took with Mr. Tevis. And how she worried. For he frankly didn't care whether he got well or not, and didn't care who knew it. Even the doctor was annoyed.

"You're sure you're giving him his medicine quite regularly?" he asked Barbara. "Because, if you missed it even once," he warned her, "it would send Tevis back to that point which is just on the border between one thing and another. And we can't afford to let Tevis reach that point again. He's been there too often."

"Is the medicine that powerful?" asked Barbara.

The doctor smiled. "It's that powerful," he told her. "It's the one thing that will keep Tevis alive in spite of himself!"

After the doctor was gone, Barbara and Mrs. Grogan looked at each other. Then Barbara went to dress for The Greatest Event in Life! For this was the evening of Mr. Roderick MacGregor's lecture.

When Barbara finished dressing she went to Bill Tevis's room—a vision of azure and silver.

"Do you think he will like me?" she asked shyly.

Bill Tevis looked hungrily at that lovely face. "Like you!" he muttered.

"You're sure you'll be all right?" Barbara asked in parting, and she laid her hand a moment on his.

"Yes—yes—I'll be quite all right," said Bill Tevis.

"Wait!" cried Bill Tevis sharply. And at the girl's look of surprise he said, "I—I forgot to tell you to have a good time!" But that wasn't what he really wanted to say at all. What he really wanted to

say was: "Oh, my dearest—I have lost you forever!"

AT the lecture hall a front aisle seat had been reserved for Barbara. She sat down in a kind of daze. The house was full of subdued chatter and the costumes were as brilliant as at the opening of the opera.

And then Roderick MacGregor, an immaculate figure in a dinner coat, walked onto the stage and stood bowing beneath the applause that welled out over the auditorium. The applause grew louder; Roderick MacGregor laughingly held up a hand. But it would not stop, and in the midst of this thunder of acclaim he faced where Barbara sat and sent her a long, long look. And instantly the rapture in her heart leaped to her eyes and answered him. When the applause had died away he began to speak.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "I come tonight to bring you a picture of Africa. And because there is one name which, to me, conjures up all the danger and all the beauty of the Black Continent, I shall tell you that name at once. It is —Tanganyika!"

Tanganyika! It laid violent hands on Barbara and brought her to the edge of her seat. Tanganyika! Immediately she remembered where she had heard it—the night Bill Tevis had been delirious. The night Bill Tevis had—— And then, suddenly, Barbara found herself trembling. For she had remembered something else! She had forgotten to give Bill Tevis his medicine!

Down on the platform Roderick MacGregor was speaking, calm, assured, secure in the knowledge that he held his audience. Suddenly Barbara felt herself filled with a cold rage. Rage—and lusty hatred. What if Roderick MacGregor was brave? She no longer demanded bravery. What if he was handsome? The time had passed when she asked for a Greek profile. Nothing mattered any more except that Bill Tevis, poor, miserable, hollow-cheeked Bill Tevis was lying dying at home, because Barbara had been so dazzled by the glory of Roderick MacGregor that she could not remember a tablespoonful of something out of a bottle!

She stood up; one or two people turned as she sped down the aisle, and even Roderick MacGregor paused in the midst of his heavily advertised address and took a step forward. But Barbara stopped for nothing. A taxi rounded corners perilously and brought her home at last. Upstairs at Bill Tevis's room she paused with a little prayer on her lips, and then she opened the door.

"I've—come back," said Barbara, and fell on her knees beside the bed.

"Why—why—" said Mr. Tevis helplessly, and then he felt Barbara's wet cheek against his own. "Why, Barbara, you mustn't," he said.

"Oh, but I must!" sobbed Barbara. "I'm a wicked, wicked girl! I forgot to give you your medicine!"

"My medicine!" said Bill Tevis. "Is that why you came home?" Barbara nodded. Bill Tevis lay struggling for a moment with this fact which was evidently too much for him. "You mean," he said, finally, "you mean that you really left—Roderick MacGregor's lecture——"

"Roderick MacGregor!" cried Barbara. "That conceited pig! And I'm worse!"

"Oh, but you're not!" remonstrated Bill Tevis earnestly. "And I really can't permit you to speak of yourself in that fashion, because—you see—you happen to be—the young lady I'm in love with!"

Barbara raised her head and sniffed charmingly. "And I love you," she said. "I thought it was Roderick—but it wasn't. It was you, all the time."

"I'm not handsome," said Bill Tevis.

"You'll look better after you fill out," said Barbara philosophically. "Everybody does"

"And I'm not brave," went on Bill. "I'm terribly afraid of snakes and things."

"Every one is," replied Barbara. "Besides, what does it matter? I love you! I don't care if you've always been sick. I don't even care if you write stories that no one will buy!"

"Don't you?" asked Bill Tevis.

"No," replied Barbara staunchly. "Because if nobody reads them, I will, darling! And we'll live on my salary till you're all well and strong. A great deal can be done on thirty-five dollars a week, you know." Bill Tevis gave a little groan.

"Oh, Barbara," he said miserably, "don't you know that I—am—I am rich?"

Barbara stared. "No!" she said.

Bill Tevis blushed with shame.

"Yes," he said, wretchedly. "I—I—have so much money I don't know what to do with it."

Barbara broke into laughter.

"You have grossly deceived me," she said. "But I suppose it is my duty to love you in spite of your wealth, isn't it?"

"Oh, Barbara, you're so good to me," said Bill Tevis gratefully, and he kissed the fingers that lay in his.

"It's the strangest thing," said Barbara when this procedure was at an end, "about my chancing to come back. It was the word Tanganyika that did it."

"Tanganyika!" echoed Bill, and for some reason he blushed again. He raised his eyes to Barbara's face and then lowered them. And then he drew a long breath.

"Barbara!" he burst out, "I—I—can't deceive you any longer! It was *I* who was the sole survivor of the African expedition!"

"What!" said Barbara. She laid her hand on his brow to ascertain if by any chance Mr. Tevis had suffered a relapse. But his brow was as cool as a cucumber. Having removed her hand from his forehead to his lips and given it the proper treatment there, Bill went on.

"I'll tell you all about it, dearest," he said. "I've been weak and ailing all my life—never able to do the things other men do. But I wanted like everything to go with this expedition, because I was so tired of being a baby. So I wrote and said I would contribute one hundred thousand dollars if I were allowed to accompany the crowd. And the offer was accepted, a hundred thousand dollars being too big to be sneezed at, I suppose. Well, in Algiers, we met Rod MacGregor. I used to know him in college, and he was always like he is now, as handsome as a god, husky as a horse, and not afraid of the devil himself! Rod had no money, but he came too.

"When we had traveled only about eighty miles—MacGregor fell into a hole and sprained his ankle. We couldn't take him with us, so we left him behind in a little village where the chief was friendly. And we went on . . ." Mr. Tevis paused.

"We were gone four months, Barbara," he continued. "And it was a terrible four months. At the end there were only twenty blacks and Watson, who organized the expedition, and me! ME! That had always been suffering from about five different diseases at once! And then —Watson died. But before he went, he made me promise I would write a book—and give a series of lectures. And I promised. You do, you know—when a fellow's dying, like that . . ."

"Yes, I know," said Barbara, and she patted his hand. Mr. Tevis appeared to be encouraged.

"Three weeks later, the blacks and I came to the village where we had left Rod. And there he was, as large as life, with the chief loving him so much he wanted to adopt him. By this time I was having my own troubles—worrying over the lectures—and being presented to the Explorers' Club, and all the rest of the stuff! And then suddenly it occurred to me! All that I had to do was—have Rod MacGregor take my place!

"Well, I proposed it to him, and he thought it was the greatest lark he had ever heard of. He spent a week memorizing the log of the trip, and we starved him good and plenty so that he would look as if he had just come out of a harrowing time in the jungle. And when we met the first committee, at the east coast, Rod was the survivor of the expedition and I was the young man that had been hired to look after the animals! It was the most amazingly easy thing you ever heard of!"

"You—you wretch!" cried Barbara. "Do you mean you are throwing away all this glory and honor simply because you are such a coward you won't get up on a platform and talk to a few hundred people?"

Bill Tevis seemed to be torn between his desire to grin and his desire to burst into tears. "Darling," he said, "if I were to get up and try to talk to a few hundred people, as you put it, I'd become paralyzingly nervous. An when I become nervous—well, you may think it funny, but I—become tongue-tied! Absolutely! Can't say a word!"

Barbara sat down on the side of the bed.

"But you've never been tongue-tied with me!" she said. "And I'm sure there are moments when you must have been nervous. A man with as much on his conscience as you!" Bill grinned.

"I have so!" he said. "But then I'd just lie and close my eyes. And you'd think I was having a weak spell. That's when you used to pat my brow with your little white hands . . ."

"You're disgraceful!" said Miss Dillon coldly. "I suppose I may ask who is writing Rod MacGregor's wonderful book? Don't you think you'd better finish unburdening your conscience?"

"Why, I am, of course," said Bill Tevis. "Rod can't even write a decent letter. That's why, you see, Rod had to pretend on one occasion, you may re-

member, that he had been called out of town. Because he had run out of copy to turn in to the editor. I had been too sick to write more—and besides, Rod didn't know where to find me."

"He didn't?" said Barbara.

"No," replied Bill. "It was this way, you see. The first day Rod came into your office, I came too."

"I never saw you," said Miss Dillon.

"No one ever does," remarked Bill. "Not when Rod's along. But I saw you. And I followed you home that evening. And took a room here. But then I got sick, that very night. And there was poor Rod—tearing his hair. He had no story—and he didn't know where to look for it, even. And then on the eighth day, I got out of bed and went over to the Ritz in a taxi—that was the night I fainted, you remember. I went over to give Rod another batch of copy."

And then Barbara remembered something. "Heavens!" she shrieked. "Your medicine! I completely forgot about it."

"Oh, I took it an hour ago," said Bill Tevis. "After you left for the lecture. However, you're just in time to administer the first dose of my new remedy—which is to be taken externally—and after meals—like this . . ." He put up a thin hand and drew Barbara's face down to his.

"Only after meals?" asked Barbara.

"And at intervals of ten minutes thereafter," said Bill Tevis.

The New Eve

—Continued from page 14

tireless men with his strength burning like a steady flame.

Furze's life was very primitive. He had come to Doomsday with his flea-bag and camp equipment, and a hundred pounds in cash, all the capital that was left him after the purchase of the farm. War gratuity, savings, the thousand pounds an aunt had left him—Doomsday had swallowed them all. A Ford taxi, chartered from Carslake station, had deposited him and all his worldly gear on the stone steps of the old, silent homestead. He had slept on his camp bed, washed in a bucket, used one box as a table and another as a seat, camping out in one room of the rambling and empty house.

Hitherto the big room had satisfied his wants, for it was parlor, bedroom, and workshop all in one; he still slept in his camp bed, and used a dining table that he had made out of deal boards with four fencing posts for legs. A second table over by the orchard window displayed a collection of harness, tools, old boxes of nails and screws. There was only one chair in the room, an old basket thing covered with faded cretonne. Practically there was no other furniture in the house; all the bedrooms were empty. The farm had had to come before his own comfort.

Yet ever since he had delivered the milk that morning at Green Shutters he had been aware of a vague unrest, a dissatisfaction. Almost it reminded him of those longings during the war when a man had sat in the mud under a tin sheet, and had thought of Piccadilly Circus, and the Savoy, and girls in pretty frocks, and tables laid for dinner, and white shirts, and a bath. Yes, he had had to cut out the æsthetics, but even if he were to fill the place with club chairs, and velvet carpets and old oak and china—what then?

Presently he opened the door into Mrs. Damaris's parlor. Empty, paneled in white, it always suggested to Furze the memory of a woman. It had a faint perfume, a faded daintiness, something that was not male. It was in this room that Furze kept the one extravagance he had allowed himself, a baby-grand piano in a rosewood case, bought at a sale at Carslake.

Leaving the door open so that the firelight flickered into Mrs. Damaris's dim white parlor, he sat down on another stool of his own making, uncovered the keyboard and played Schubert. He played well, with a firm touch and a richness of feeling. But in that empty house the music sounded ghostly.

CHAPTER III

THERE was in Mary Viner a gentleness that consented, and a young idealism that rebelled.

In the matter of the week's washing Cinder Town divided itself into the washers and the washed. To Mary Viner Monday was always a day of pain. If to hate doing your own washing and hanging it out to dry were snobbery then she confessed herself a snob, though ex-Lieutenant Harold Coode kept her in countenance by hanging out his shirts next door. True, he appeared to have only two of them, the one with the patch, and the one that had no patch. They alternated on the six feet of clothes-line behind The Oast.

On the other side were the Jimmison children, two tow-haired savages. They poked their heads above the fence, and giggled and were rude, and sometimes a clod of clay left a mark in the middle of one of Mary's sheets or towels.

But the culminating Jimmison joy arrived when the clothes line broke, which it did on occasions. And the line broke upon this particular morning in March. Mary, with a soul that burned, was rescuing the wreckage when she heard a voice behind her.

"You are busy? Do come and look at my new car."

On the grass behind her stood Winnifred Twist, an only child and precious as Ming china. The Twists might live in Cinder Town, but they made it obvious that they were not obliged to live there. Winnifred's father emphasized his potential freedom by always talking of "Selling the damned hovel."

Mary, with the two ends of the broken line in her hands, felt a sudden rage which she was careful to subdue. It was human of Winnifred to show off, but it was not kind of her to show off to Mary, with that washing draggled on the grass.

"Oh, it has come. I heard you were having one."

"Do come and look. She's just outside. I have been up to Carslake and back. And I nearly ran into a cart. Made the horse shy."

Mary was voiceless.

"The man with the cart cut up quite rough about it. That Furze man who sells us milk. He's a bit of a boor. I shall advise the mater to change her milkman."

Mary, sleeves rolled above the elbows, reknotted the rope, and felt herself overpowered by her friend's chatter. Going out to inspect the car she found half Cinder Town gathered about it. Colonel Twist was there, and Mr. Stephen Perrivale, and Commander Triton booming cheerfully, and the Brownlows, and poor Coode who fixed his one pathetic eye on Mary and watched her as she stood between the Twist father and the Twist daughter. Why did not some one give Mary a car? Why could not he give her a car? That sorry old bicycle of hers always made him feel a little thick in the throat.

"What a beauty!" said Miss Viner.

She smiled. They all smiled. The car smirked and glistened, and sleeked itself in its new blue coat. It was only a little car, but in Cinder Town a car was a notable possession.

"New balloon tires, I see," said Coode, and was smothered by the Triton foghorn.

"Very pretty, very pretty. Twist, you will be paying fines. That's the penalty——"

Up the cinder road came a cart loaded with cord-wood, and a man whose eyes were still angry, walking beside it. The group had to stand to one side while the cart passed by. Furze gave one glance at the blue car, and spoke to nobody. His eyes lifted as he passed, and dwelt for a moment on the face and figure of Mary Viner.

She had her sleeves rolled up and her hands were red.

"Cinderella."

He had christened her.

THERE were times when Mary Viner reasoned with herself, composing little homilies which laid gentle and restraining hands upon her restlessness. She confronted the old problem of the begetter and the begotten, trying to feel dutiful and not succeeding. She knew in her heart that age and youth should not live together. She felt her exasperations to be atrocious, for her parents were nice old people, sweetly selfish in feeling themselves unselfish.

Oh, those evenings, those long winter evenings when Green Shutters seemed buried under a mountain of finality. Noth-

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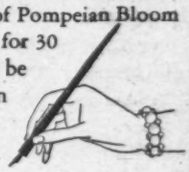

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ing happened, nothing could happen, save perhaps the occasional and tentative intrusion of poor Coode who sat nobly on the edge of a chair, and called Captain Hesketh "Sir," and listened politely to an old soldier's meanderings.

There had been nights when she had put on a hat and rushed out wildly into the darkness.

"Where are you going, Mary?"

Where? Why? They always wanted to know the reason for everything. As if one could give reasons, at the age of three and twenty, when life felt like a dead volcano, and your heart was ready to break for something and nothing.

On rare days she would escape for an hour or two on her old bicycle, riding up to Carslake to do the household shopping, buying meat and groceries, and her father's cough mixture.

It was on one of these excursions to Melhurst early in that March that her old hack of a bicycle broke its chain halfway up a long hill. She accepted the rupture as fate, and went on, wheeling her machine.

A blue wagon drawn by two gray horses, coming from Melhurst, appeared at the top of the hill. It rolled towards her, and Furze stopped his horses, rising from his seat on the rail.

"Any trouble, Miss Viner?"

"My bicycle chain is broken——"

He came down at once, asked no permission, but picked up the machine and lifted it onto the load of fertilizer he was bringing from Melhurst station.

"Will you ride?"

She had a curiously instant knowledge of the fact that as a woman she pleased him. Her thoughts flew back to the morning when he had brought the milk, and she had shown him a smudged face. Again her color changed quickly.

"It is very good of you."

She had not visualized his helping her up, and she felt more lifted than helped. His hands were strong, but they touched her gently, giving her a sudden and vivid impression of contact with a feeling of reverence. She was just a little confused.

"Where shall I sit?"

"Wait a moment."

He was up in the wagon, gathering two or three sacks and a horse-blanket. He made a seat for her on top of the phosphate, folding the sacks deliberately and placing the blanket upon them as though the careful doing of it mattered.

"That ought to do."

"Thank you so much."

She smiled and sat down. And he, smiling down at her momentarily with a something in his eyes that went straight down into the deeps of her, climbed over the edge and gained the road.

He was going to walk.

"Oh, please!" she felt like saying, and was silent. If he meant to walk, well—it meant . . . She drew a deep breath. For his walking was like his touching her; an act that was both sensitive and big and manly.

He owned Doomsday Farm. He was supposed to be a little unusual. She had seen the house in the distance from the field path by Beech Ho, and had thought it romantic, and a little mysterious, but lovely. Him too, in a sense, she had only seen at a distance, and almost as though he shared Doomsday's mystery and loneliness.

Half way up the long hill he stopped his horses, and let them rest. Next moment he was speaking to her, looking up steadily into her face.

"Do you mind the smell of fertilizer?"

No, she did not mind it, thought it rather fragrant.

"Country smells are," he said, "at least to me. You don't get out much I suppose?"

"No, not much."

His quiet blue eyes confused her. "Women don't. Not with housework. Same with me. I'm stuck there on the soil."

She had a feeling that he approved of woman as a domestic creature, and his man's view of it was as of something natural and inevitable. Vaguely she was aware of resenting this.

"You think women ought to work?"

His blue eyes suggested that he had never thought of it in any other way than that.

"Well, don't they? Ninety-nine out of a hundred. It's life."

He had silenced her, and he seemed suddenly aware of the fact, and grew silent himself. Then he restarted his horses. Where the Melhurst and the Rotherbridge roads joined he pulled up.

She stood up, and refused his hand. "I can manage, thank you."

But she had to leave him the handling of her bicycle. She noticed that he glanced at her with something between perplexity and half amused concern.

"Thank you so much," she said.

"Not at all. Glad to have been of use."

He raised his old felt hat, and with a grave and smileless nod she turned away towards Cinder Town.

CHAPTER IV

AT EIGHT o'clock on a moonlit March night a young woman went out with a jug in quest of milk.

For Ransford, the Carslake doctor, expected all day, had not arrived at Green Shutters till seven o'clock. Two old people in bed, coughing in chorus and both with temperatures. He had ordered milk and junket—at once.

Hence, Mary's quest for milk, for she found none in the larder.

She tried the Perrivales, to be met with "So sorry but we haven't a drop." She hesitated outside the Brownlows, and then went on down the cinder track. She would find milk at Doomsday.

The moonlight splintered itself upon the larches. She went softly, fancied she could see a light shining beyond the trunks of the trees, and watched it for a moment as she went on past the pond. She opened the gate, hesitated and was guided by the light.

She was on the very doorstep when a sound surprised her, three deep rich chords played upon a piano. Those prelude sounds were followed by one of Chopin's ballads, played as a strong man might be expected to play it, with a largeness of touch and a good deal of feeling. She was astonished. But why astonishment? A man might be a farmer and yet a lover of music, she thought.

She stood and heard it out, the white jug held against her body between her two breasts. Her knock, when it came, was rather tentative and timid. It was answered by the barking of a dog. Then she heard footsteps, and the door was opened.

He did not recognize her at once, for she was in the shadow, and the light from the fire was wayward.

"Yes, what is it?"

She spoke quickly, as though a little out of breath. "I'm so sorry to trouble you at this hour. My people are ill. The doctor ordered milk."

"Miss Viner . . ."

He stood back a little, and was silent for a moment, as though he was in doubt about something, or was embarrassed by her coming.

"I'm sorry. Nothing very serious, I hope?"

"Bronchitis."

"Both?"

"Yes."

"Rather hard luck on you. The jug——"

She gave him the jug, wondering whether he was going to leave her standing on the doorstep, and if so, why? She could see Bobbo's fluffy head pressed against one of Furze's legs; even the dog seemed to deliberate.

"Won't you come by the fire—while I go to the dairy. I'm afraid I'm rather a backwoodsman."

Now that he had asked her in she hung back.

"Oh, no. I mustn't bother you. I'll wait here."

"Please come in. I won't keep you a moment."

There was that in his voice which said, "You shall come in," and she obeyed it, and to mask the surrender she spoke to the dog. She would not show her face, but while she bent over Bobbo she saw him move to the right, and put his hand behind him, and close a door that appeared to open into another room. Now, why did he do that? She supposed that the piano was in that other room. But what could he wish to hide? A piano and a room which seemed to have had no light in it? She stiffened as her thoughts extended.

"Please sit down."

He had pushed the one chair forward, and she seated herself as though she were made of china, while he, with a queer look at her, went out by another door, carrying her jug. Sitting very still, she turned a head on a rigid neck, and scanned this room of his and its poverty and disorder, its improvised tables, its pile of logs in a corner, its camp bed. Surely, he did not live in this room? The work bench with its litter of tools and odd pieces of harness convinced her that he used this room to work in. And in her innocence she supposed the dog slept upon the camp bed.

She heard Furze returning, and directly he reappeared she stood up.

"Thank you so much."

She held out her hands for the jug, smiling uneasily, her eyes downcast. She was in a kind of panic mood, and when she got herself to the door she realized that he was behind her.

What color do you feel today?

(A CURIOUS QUESTION)

CURIOUS? Yes. . . . Silly? Not in the least. Mysterious perhaps, but we *do* "feel" different colors. When sad, we feel "blue"; when happy, we feel rosy, glowing, bright. All true, isn't it?

But—and here is the startling thought—how do we *look*? We are judged by that! At golf, for instance? Cheeks too pale, costume neutral, the impression is *depression*. If in reality your mood is gay, the gayety *seems forced*. You *do not look the part*.

Or, again, if you feel deliciously tranquil, how sadly at variance with your true mood are too bright and robust colors. Your whole day may be spoiled simply because you *do not look the color you feel*.

So we come, convincingly, to the reason for the *new mode* which is rapidly changing the rouge preferments of America's cleverest women. It is the most exciting vogue in years—using rouge to *express one's moods*.

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Try it. Suppose you feel that uplifting inner urge toward gayety. You feel brilliant, vital, alive, eager. You want desperately to have that mood register, to evoke quick, understanding response in others. Then *look the part*. Use Princess Pat Rouge Vivid. Watch the mirror. See how the wonderful new *color note* is instantly achieved. It is so "just right" that you get a complete new thrill from your own reflection in the glass. But the point is that you'll *thrill beholders as well*.

And the soft, delicate effect of Princess Pat Medium! Ah, that is for the hour and occasion when dreams mist o'er realities and "beckon romance softly." It is the shade that gives the rich, warm creams and pinks of a "peaches and cream" complexion. Its *color note* is serenity, cool, soft serenity, like moonlight silvering a breathless lake on a still June night.

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Think, Milady. You choose your frocks with vast care so that they may express *you*. Your choice of rouge is *even more important*. For a brilliant costume with a neutral rouge is terribly discordant. Similarly, a soft, pastel gown with a brilliant rouge is disharmony. You invest heavily in gowns—why not make the investment yield fullest beauty?

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NOTE: *Color harmony between lips and cheeks should be exact. With Vivid Rouge, use Vivid Lipstick; with Medium Rouge, or English Tint, use Princess Pat Natural Lipstick.*

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"Good night, Mr. Furze. Don't bother."

"I'm coming, too," he said. "Take care of the steps. Wait while I light a lantern."

She spilt some of the milk on the doorstep while she was waiting there. He came and held the lantern shoulder high so that she could see the steps, and when she was down them he moved quickly in front of her to light her along the path.

"Just follow."

She followed, and when they reached the gate he held it open for her.

"Please," she said, "I can manage now. Good night."

"Good night. I hope your people will soon be better. If I can be of help——"

His voice held her there for a moment, very still, and looking up at him.

"I think I heard you playing——"

"Oh, my poor old piano? Yes, Chopin. Good for these winter evenings. And then I heard you knock."

She was holding the white jug to her breast, and to him her eyes appeared dark and immense. He stood and watched her go down the road.

What had she thought of his room with its rough tables and its litter and its deplorable old chair? It must have seemed to her a squalid hole. And what if the seeming squalor of it had attached itself to her impression of him? He was conscious of a gust of mortification.

She would not understand, perhaps, how he had had to labor in the service of the soil, and that he had had neither time nor patience nor money to be fastidious? He had just succeeded in keeping clean. But that room, and Mary sitting on the edge of the chair as though she was not sure of it, and her air of rigid decorum, and her half frightened eyes, and her hurry to be gone!

"Damn!" he said, and flung away from the gate. "I can't afford sentiment—at present."

A LITTLE flickering yellowness in the tree-tops, and the daffodils blown flat in Furze's orchard—such seemed the beginnings of the Spring that year. A night's gale had stripped tiles off the roof, overturned a beech tree on the edge of Beech Ho, and unroofed two of the lambing pens. On the soil it is the expected that happens, and a man of the soil must expect trouble.

But looked at largely life was very good. Moreover, Arnold had bought a carpet, two basket chairs, a sofa, a small painted wood table, and a fender.

The carpet was down in Mrs. Damaris's parlor, and on the white walls he had tacked up three or four colored pictures collected from old magazines. Obviously, furnishing was some business, and he had tried the chairs, the sofa and the table in every sort of position, and then given it up, leaving them all backed against the walls.

"A woman would do it in two minutes," he supposed.

It was a woman's room, and it needed a woman. Yes, good God, how it needed one! That furniture! Quite hopeless! Why on earth had he bought it? Because of a silly, shy male pride, and after a moment of mortification?

"That's not my job," he thought. "It should be hers."

He closed the door firmly, but his hand remained on the handle. Something very deep stirred in him. Five years of loneliness, and all that he had lacked! He began to yearn for it now with a fierceness that was part of his man's nature. He was not a man to love easily or soon.

"Dear heart—it is time. The Spring is here."

He smiled. His deep blue eyes had light in them. He went and opened the door leading to the old staircase, and climbing it, passed slowly from room to room. He stood in the center of each of them, looking gravely and intently round. Yes, this should be the woman's room, the one looking south over the roof of Mrs. Damaris's parlor and her garden. He must do something with that garden.

CHAPTER V

COLONEL SYKES was a bachelor. Behind him his cook-housekeeper was clearing away the tea things from the oak table. An immensely tall woman, and incredibly ugly. She had been with Colonel Sykes for seven years.

Colonel Sykes completed the lighting of his cigaret and threw the match into a brass ash-tray on his writing table. He was feeling young, sentimentally and benignly young, a well-tailored Orpheus whose young old fingers were fidgeting to twang the strings of a romantic and domestic lyre!

Over the mantelpiece hung a mirror of the Regency period, and Colonel Sykes wandered firewards to look at himself in the mirror. He passed a hand over the back of his head, and gathering his eyeglass adjusted it into his left eye.

"Capital, capital! Splendid, splendid!"

Notable words during the war, for the junior members of his mess had caught their colonel on one occasion in this very same pose, and addressing his own reflection. Irreverently they had christened him the "Parrot." Those words served him in every sort of crisis.

"Splendid! Capital!"

He turned to the window. From it he could look down the Cinder Via Sacra he had created, into the Viner's garden. Mary Viner was mowing the lawn. The Colonel's eyes grew sentimental.

"Poor child—poor little Mary."

Twenty-four was she! And he felt less than forty, and was quite sure that he could pass for forty-five. Splendid, splendid! Capital, capital! A pretty, affectionate, dark-eyed creature this Mary Viner, a young woman who stayed at home and did her job, God bless her, without much jam on the bread.

Colonel Sykes stroked his chin and considered the girl in the garden. Poor little Mary! Life was rather hard for her.

Colonel Sykes collected copies of Punch. Not that he needed an excuse to wander into the Green Shutters garden, but the neighborly loan of magazines . . . Capital, capital; splendid, splendid! He was sure she would make a sweet wife.

Pausing with his bundle of magazines he looked with sentimental blue eyes in the direction of his lady. Some one was coming up the cinder road. That fellow Furze, "Captain Furze." To Colonel Sykes there was no incongruity in the reverting of a temporary captain to the status of a milkman, but when he saw Furze stop at the Green Shutters' gate, he felt challenged. What did the chap want there? Had he called for his money? The Viners were never anything but hard up.

"Damn the fellow!" thought Colonel Sykes, and threw down his magazines. It was impossible for him—Colonel Sykes—to call as long as that milkman had the nerve to hang about. What was he doing anyway?

The Viner lawn-mower was like most things in Cinder Town, a makeshift. It gnawed the grass instead of cutting it. It had clenched its teeth upon many rusty nails and small stones, and its soul had grown churlish and embittered.

Furze had come to the gate a moment after the knives of the machine had jammed, and Mary was trying to extract a rusty nail from the mower's teeth. Hot, flushed, and a little peeved, she looked up and saw him. He was half inside the gate.

"Trouble?" He smiled and bent over the mower. His strong brown fingers freed the blades. He tossed the bent nail into a flower bed, and began to finish the job. She stood and watched him, feeling vividly conscious of him and of herself, and of all the windows and the gardens; of poor Coode standing wistfully in the door of his hut, and of Colonel Sykes' eye-glass fixed upon them like a telescope.

"It wants sharpening," Furze said suddenly.

She agreed that most probably it did.

A few stridings to and fro and the mowing was finished. He picked up the machine.

"Where do you keep it?"

"Oh, in the tool shed."

She led the way to the tool shed, a brown box no bigger than a small chicken-house.

"I hope your people are better?"

He had put the mower away, and she was wondering whether she should ask him into the house. She was ashamed of the house.

"Oh, much better, thank you."

He was taking something out of the side pocket of his coat, six brown eggs in a paper bag. He handed them to her.

"Thought your mother might like these."

She was touched. Six brown eggs in a paper bag! She had to ask him into the house after that, to show the eggs to Mrs. Viner who was a child in these matters.

"See what Mr. Furze has brought you."

Old Hesketh tried to make Furze take his arm-chair: "Sit down, my dear fellow." But Furze would not hear of it. He sat on a straight chair in front of the fire, between the two old people, with Mary on a footstool.

They talked, or rather Hesketh and his guest talked, while Mrs. Charlotte knitted and threw at Furze quick birdlike glances. She weighed in her mind the man who brought them eggs, and who probably

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wanted to marry her daughter. A farmer, but a farmer who could claim to have that notable word "gentleman" added to him. Yes, Captain Arnold Furze—gentleman farmer. Captain Furze was not strictly an army man of course, but in these topsy-turvy days did it matter?

"You ought to see the bluebells in Gore Wood." Furze's eyes seemed to catch the firelight as he spoke of the wild flowers and looked down at Mary.

"I should love to."

"Any time you like. Go where you please, you know."

He was silent for half a minute after offering her free trespass upon his farm, and then suddenly he rose, bent to Mrs. Charlotte, and laid a big and restraining hand on old Hesketh's shoulder. "Please don't get up, sir."

Mary went with him to the door.

"You know that when I say a thing I mean it, Mary."

It was the first time that he had called her Mary, and he uttered the name as though it was both beautiful and sacred.

"I believe you do. You mean—about the farm?"

"Yes, go where you please, and take what you please. Fruit, flowers—anything."

He took a step down the path.

"I'm going to Melhurst tomorrow. There is a big sale on there. I am taking the wagon."

"Animals?"

She fancied that he laughed slightly and soundlessly, if laughter can be soundless.

"No, furniture and things."

"Oh, furniture?"

Very significant—that, and she knew it.

"You love old things?"

"Old things for an old house. I shall be away most of the day. Wish me luck, will you?"

"Of course," she said. "I wish you all sorts of bargains."

They parted; she going back to that dull little house, he to the great spaces of his fields and woodlands. He felt that he could throw his hat as high as the tops of the Six Firs, but she had been caught by a sudden panic of seriousness. She was looking beyond him and through the quivering air of her emotion at the ultimate choosing and its finalities.

Doomsday! A farm! Her soul cried out that it was not fair because there was a part of her that wanted to open its arms and leap. She wanted Arnold Furze the man, but not Arnold Furze the farmer.

He was so strong. He could rough it. But she began to be afraid of his very strength.

"He would not understand," she thought. "His idea is the man on the land, the woman in the house. Yes, yes, —I know. A human partnership. And yet——"

No, she felt that she could not stand it.

CHAPTER VI

AT GREAT PARK FARM, country carts, Fords, and a light lorry or two were parked in the paddock, while their owners went in search of bargains. Furze wandered about, catalogue in hand, and marked the lots for which he wished to bid upon the catalogue. In the farmhouse parlor he found a massive old oak table with chamfered rails, black brown with age, put together by some village carpenter a hundred and fifty years ago. On the table was laid out a pink luster tea service, and Furze the lover saw Mary's hands fluttering over the old china. He marked down the table, Lot 33; also the pink luster tea service, Lot 67. Wandering about the house with a crowd of farmers' wives, bargain-hunters and snatchers of the antique, he found many pieces fit for Doomsday. His pencil left marks against an oak bureau, a mahogany chest of drawers, three old Windsor chairs, a bedstead, an oak chest, a long mirror in a faded gilt frame, a length of stair carpet, a deal cupboard, a set of knives, a Willow pattern dinner service, a Chesterfield sofa that would need recovering. Particularly did he covet the pink luster tea service.

The sale was held in the garden. It was a hot day, and the bidding was languid. Arnold was lucky. He lost the oak bureau, but he won the tea service, the table, the mahogany chest of drawers, the Windsor chairs, the bedstead, the oak chest, the long mirror, the stair carpet, and half a dozen other bargains.

Furze loaded his possessions on to the wagon and started for Doomsday. He was happy. The rose luster tea service, carefully packed in a box, was the cynosure of the day's happenings. As he drove he made plans for the disposal of the furniture.

AT DOOMSDAY Arnold Furze had been preparing for a tea party. Mrs. Sarah, Will Blossom's wife, chartered for an extra morning, had scrubbed the tiled floor of the living room, and the brick floor of the kitchen, and poked her blue-tipped nose into all sorts of matters that did not concern her. Furze had locked up the pink luster tea service in a cupboard, and that locked cupboard had tantalized the lady through the whole of the morning.

But the labor of love was the man's. With oil and beeswax and two old socks he polished the oak table and the chest. He brought in flowers. An old red bread pan he filled with foxgloves and stood it in a corner, and on the oak table were crimson stocks in a blue bowl. Mrs. Damaris's parlor had a sheaf of yellow flags from Rushy Pool. As for the sunk garden, the canterbury-bells and the sweet-williams were in early blossom; the grass had been scythed and the beds weeded.

The ritual of tea gave Furze some thoughtful moments. He decided to have the luster service set out on the pie-crust table, and the bread and butter and the cakes on the painted table. And he would make the tea himself, or with Mary to help him. Young Blossom was sent up to Carslake for cakes, and getting seven for sixpence, purloined and ate the seventh and most sugary one on the way back. Then there was the thin bread and butter. Furze cut it himself after his dinner, with great care and concentrated solemnity, finding the loaf rather too new and the knife too blunt for the carving of slices of ideal thinness. The beastly things would buttonhole! Still—there it was, twelve slices well buttered, and laid like weather-boarding on one of the Willow pattern dishes. He put it away in the dairy to keep moist.

MARY VINER sometimes wondered how her mother and father had managed to be born, for always they were late. Furze had asked them for half past four and at four-twenty Mary could hear them twittering away upstairs like a couple of sparrows.

She called up the stairs.

"It is nearly half past four."

The door of the room opened.

"We shall not be five minutes, dear. Your father found two buttons off his summer waistcoat."

The door was reclosed and Mary knew that nothing would hurry them. Yet, presently, they would come downstairs in a fluster of agitation.

And today she also felt fussed and agitated. The weather was abominably hot; she had had a good deal of cooking to do, and had dressed in a hurry, and at the last moment a stocking had "laddered." What were they talking about upstairs?

The conversation upstairs concerned her. Old Hesketh had accomplished a very indifferent knotting of his tie, and Mrs. Charlotte was retying it for him.

"Well, if it does happen, Nellie will come. She always said she would. And it would be a home for her. Do stand still, Hesketh."

"Sorry, my dear. These things have to be faced. One can't stand in the way——"

"That's better. Of course—a farmer's life—not quite what one might wish. But he does own the farm. Mary has been so restless lately. I was almost afraid that she might do something foolish—like marrying Colonel Sykes."

Old Hesketh bristled. "Sykes! You don't mean to tell me——"

"I think so."

"Preposterous! Why, the man is only ten years younger than I am. My dear, it is five and twenty minutes to five."

"Dear, dear, we shall be late. Where is my sunshade? I'm sure I put it out. Look in the cupboard——"

Mary had to find the sunshade for her mother, and then the three of them set out as though they were chasing the wheels of a social whirl.

Mary shepherded them on, though they showed an inclination to dawdle at the gate because Mrs. Charlotte had seen a swallow! With Furze visible at the corner of the yew hedge, a man who had been kept waiting for half an hour.

"Mother, there is Mr. Furze."

Furze, with an air of unclouded pleasure, shook her mother's hand and then her father's, and said how hot it was and how glad he was to see them. But the house was cool; it was not built yesterday. He was sure Mary's mother wanted her tea. He gave her his arm up the steps.

"You must not expect too much of a mere bachelor, Mrs. Viner."

Mary's mother fell into a sudden delight with the first room, and her delight

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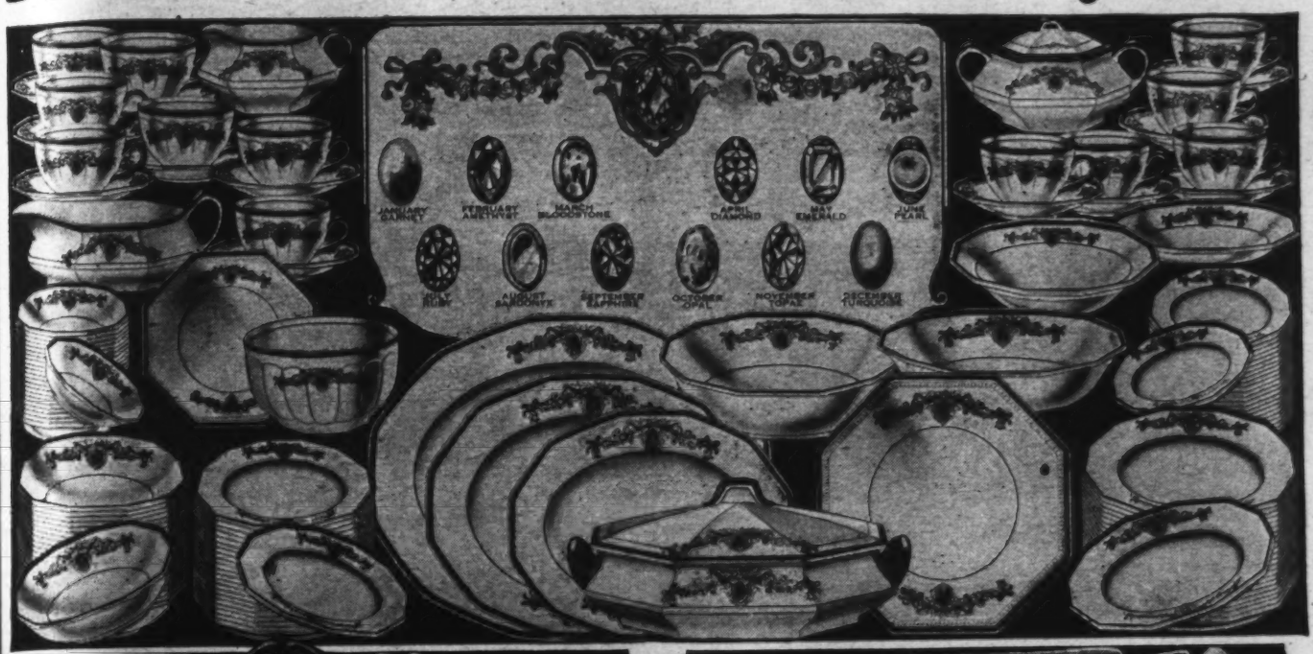

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was quite genuine. "What a lovely room, so restful. The old tiles and the oak." Furze looked very happy and a little shy. His eyes kept touching Mary with quick, tentative glances. What did she think of it? She stood there by the door, her brown eyes fixed upon nothing in particular, while her mother went on twittering.

"Your flowers, Mr. Furze! Who arranged them?"

"I did."

Furze was opening the door of Mrs. Damaris's parlor. "We will have tea in here."

He stood aside and they passed in, and he looked at Mary as though asking for a flicker of acknowledged pleasure. Mrs. Viner sat down on the sofa.

"Sweet," she said, "perfectly sweet. Why, you have got pink luster. I've always wanted pink luster. Mary, dear, isn't it sweet?"

"Yes, very," said the daughter.

"Who will pour out for me?" Furze looked from one woman to the other.

"Of course Mary will," said her mother.

"Will you?"

His eyes besought her. Without looking at him, she took one of the chairs by the tea table.

"We none of us take sugar. Do you?"

"I'm afraid I do."

He was waiting to pass the cups. Her hands were moving over those pink cups, and they gave him a sense of tremulousness. She was here, in his house, touching his possessions, things he had striven and waited for. She had picked up the milk jug; its handle had been riveted, and with the weight of the milk in it, the riveting gave way. There was a crash as the jug struck the edge of the table and broke; milk ran across the table and fell in a little stream upon the floor.

Her eyes trembled up at him.

"Oh, I'm so sorry."

He laughed. He wanted to tell her that she could break everything in the house. Her scared brown eyes and plaintive mouth made his love hold its breath.

"Not your fault. I ought to have tried that handle. Besides, there is plenty more milk."

He gathered the broken pieces, and suddenly inspired, called the dog.

"Here, Bobbo, tongue—old chap, nice new milk."

The dog came and lapped at the white pool and Furze laughed, and so drew a little awkward laughter from the others.

Afterwards they went out into Mrs. Damaris's garden, and where one of the old yews threw a band of shadow Furze placed three of his Windsor chairs. They talked about the farm, Mrs. Charlotte asking questions and Furze answering them. He was leaning against the stone wall, filling his pipe, and trying to assure himself that Mary's silence was not the silence of boredom. He wished it was the daughter who was asking these questions, instead of sitting there with her hands clasped over her knees. Or was it that the breaking of that precious milk jug had upset her? She seemed lost in a mood of aloofness.

He turned to the father. "You don't shoot, sir, do you?"

No, Captain Hesketh did not shoot. He had never been able to afford "huntin' and shootin'," not even in India. But he had something to say on indigo planting, and the difference between Eastern and Western smells. Furze listened, and then spoke of English scents, hops, and hay, and a bean field in bloom.

"I have a field in flower. Why not stroll down there?"

Captain Hesketh and his wife exchanged glances. Some telepathic message seemed to pass. Old Viner looked at his watch; his wife explained that she was a poor walker in hot weather, and that the day was very hot. They ought to be getting home. But there was no reason why Mary should not go down to the bean field while two old people toddled back to Cinder Town.

CHAPTER VII

THEY came to the gate, and Bean Acres lay spread before them, six acres of black and white flowers heavy with exquisite perfume. Furze breathed it in deeply. It was the very scent of her and her presence.

"Heaven might smell like this."

Mary's hands were resting on the top of the gate, and on either side the shaggy old thorn hedges added their scent to the fragrance of the field. It was overwhelming. He was so near, and they were so utterly alone.

"I mus'n't—I mus'n't," she kept saying to herself. "It would be so hopeless, so wrong. I ought not to have come out here."

He was leaning beside her over the gate.

"Clean land, Mary. It nearly killed me—getting it clean. I'm glad it didn't."

She began to shake. The smell of that field seemed to be intoxicating her.

"Yes, you must have worked. I can understand that, because I work, and because I am lazy—really."

She was talking as though to keep off fate.

"I'm—I'm so sorry about that jug."

"I bought it for you to break. You can take the service piece by piece and break it, if you wish. You could take me—the man—and break me—my darling——"

She uttered a cry. It had happened. She was trying to hide her face, and his arms were round her.

"My dear—my dear . . ."

She closed her eyes. His arms seemed to grow more strong. She felt his warm breath, and then—kisses on her eyes and mouth. She was returning his kisses. Her mouth was plaintive and passionate.

"Oh, it's wrong; it's madness," cried a voice within her.

But her surrender was like a falling into a sweet and deep sleep. She felt herself lifted up and carried in his arms to a bank under the shade of the old thorns.

FURZE wanted to see her people that very night, and she had had to put him off. "No, not tonight, Arnold." And when he had spoken of marriage she had looked playfully confused and self-conscious. "What a hurry you are in!" But he was not the sort of man to be put off for long. She lay prone, and clasped her pillow. He had breathed the fatal fire into her, for she was a dark girl and warm-blooded. She wanted him, just as he wanted her, yet differently. And yet—was their wanting of each other different? Would he sacrifice his farm if she asked him to do it? He was asking her to sacrifice, but then, of course, it did not appear to him like that. And could she tell him? It would be honest to say, "Arnold, I can't live such a life. I'm not made for it. It would mean unhappiness for us both." She felt that it would not convince him. "What is my girl afraid of? What is it that frightens you?" And if she were honest she would have to tell him that she loathed housework, and poverty, and loneliness, a life of cooking and mending and dish washing.

And she supposed he would despise her, because he loved work, and was rooted in the soil. He was utterly different from herself, and she saw disaster in an attempt to mate with such a difference.

What should she do? She wanted him—the lover, and the arms of a lover. Tell him she could not leave her people, at least, not yet? Yes, that was an idea. Meanwhile she would be fondled and kissed and the woman's yearn in her assuaged. Yes, to a point. But how far?

At breakfast, realising that there was wisdom in regularizing the affair, she let it be known that Arnold Furze had asked her to marry him. Consented? Well, not exactly. She wanted to know more of him, and also she did not see her way to leaving Green Shutters to the mercy of some casual slattern.

"Oh, but we have thought of that," said her mother archly, and much excited. "It was always agreed that your Cousin Nellie would come to us. It will be a home for her."

This was rather too unexpected. Mary had not properly reconnoitered all her defences.

She passed a most difficult day, and in the evening Arnold Furze came down from Doomsday. She left him alone with her father and went out into the garden, and at the end of five minutes they joined her there.

"I am afraid that I can give your daughter only a working home, sir. But it is a good life."

"My dear fellow, Mary knows what work is."

She did, but not as her father understood it, nor as Furze understood it, and when they were left alone together in the garden she had to warn the lover in him. That was the worst of these cramped, cheek by jowl lives; you had to be so careful.

"Have you ever seen the sunset from the Six Firs?"

No, she had not. But as she had certain things to say to him she accepted the sunset, and the public parade past the windows of Cinder Town. At the gate she was aware of him pausing, and looking at poor Coode's iron hut.

"Rather pathetic—that."

"Yes, it is not Doomsday—oak."

He glanced at her questioningly. "I cannot help loving the place. You will learn to love it too. A little world of one's own, where you can say what you

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please—just as loudly as you wish——"

Her face silenced him. She had seen the Twists' blue car turning into the cinder road, with Winnifred at the wheel, late home from a tennis party. And she was walking with Winnie's "milkman." Oh, what a snob she was! She felt a sudden scorn of herself, and was able to give her friend a smile that implied her companion was Captain Arnold Furze of Doomsday. She was kinder to him after that, because she felt a wistful need of his kindness.

"You won't hurry me—will you, Arnold?"

She was sitting at the foot of one of the trees, and he stood leaning against the trunk.

"I'm at your service, my beloved. When one is very happy, one does not want to hurry. Besides there is more to do yet before you come to me. I have had so much to do on the land that I have had neither the time nor the money to do justice to the house. It shall be the house now—because it will be my beloved's house."

She felt a choking in her throat.

"You are a good man, Arnold."

SO, FINDING it sweet to be loved as this man loved her, she temporized. It was not fair to him, and she knew it. To hundreds of sensitive women that old Sussex homestead would have put forth many appeals. They would have understood its sureness, its permanence, its happy and green isolation, secure from the cheap and gaping crowd.

And servants! For suddenly she had come to realise that they would not be able to afford a servant, at least, not yet. He expected her, his wife, to work in the house as he worked on the farm. Certainly he had put it to her gently, but he did not appear to think that there was anything inhuman in her working like a servant. "You and I together, Mary."

The issue grew more final when he took her over the house, and with an air of tender seriousness asked her to suggest any improvements and alterations.

"Your department, you know—and a woman has ideas. Anything to save labor."

She stood beside him in the dark kitchen. His arm was round her. Something had to be said.

"That range must be very extravagant."

"I suppose it is. We might scrap it, and put in a small one."

"And the sink. It ought to be glazed, and stand higher, and have draining boards."

She wondered whether he would be offended, but she found him intelligently interested. He made her stand at the sink.

"Yes, that's obvious. With a higher sink you don't have to stoop. Anything else?"

There was one most obvious defect, and the worst of them all.

"No water laid on, Arnold; not even a pump. Every drop has to be carried in."

He looked very serious over this.

"By Jove, yes, what an ass! I have managed somehow, but I always meant to have it altered."

His enthusiasm troubled her. Here she was inspiring him to all sorts of schemes that were to improve the internal economy of the house for the benefit of the woman, but she had no intention of becoming the woman in charge.

He had got hold of a note-book and a pencil, and was making notes.

"I'll go up to Crofts at Carslake and get them to give me an estimate on these things. Yes, those trees will have to go this winter," he said quite cheerfully. "Hot water in the house is better than oak in a wood. Yes, we will have a good range and a hot water boiler put in while we are about it."

He put his arm round her and kissed her, and she felt like weeping.

CHAPTER VIII

THEY were cutting the Long Meadow. The whir and clatter of the reaper had begun very early. The fragrant smell of dried grass was floating on the air, and as Furze drove round and round he felt like a triumphant charioteer. Haymaking with the weather set fair, a haze of heat over the June woods, and Mary coming down in the cool of the evening to see her first hay crop raked into cocks.

Yes, life was good. The crop was a heavy one, and he was getting it under ideal conditions. And up at the farm Messrs. Crofts—ironmongers and sanitary engineers—were fitting a new and efficient little range in the kitchen, installing a force pump in the well, and a super sink with teak draining boards. Mary, the housewife, was to be lovingly humored.

So, the heat of the day passed, and the horizontal sun shot his arrows of gold over the tops of the hedge-rows. Will had gone home, and Furze was idling in the lane, waiting for his beloved. She found him by the Six Firs with a face that had the glow of the hay field upon it. She was afraid.

"Things to show you," he said.

His possessive arms encircled her. Then they went down between the green hedge-rows to the farm.

"Things to show."

The labors of Messrs. Crofts' men in the kitchen had left behind a smell of mortar and stale tobacco, but the new grate had a polished and genial face, and the glazed sink was waiting for her hands.

"How's that for height, Mary?"

She had to try it, drooping pale hands over the edge of it, while he stood and looked and loved.

"You don't have to stoop."

"No."

She was glad when he spoke of going down to the Long Meadow.

"Happy, sweetheart?"

She nodded, but would not speak. Under the big chestnut by the lower gate he held her and kissed her with more abandonment. She half closed her eyes, feeling herself floating in a soft green twilight under the dome of the tree. They went on through the gate into the Long Meadow, and her knees felt weak under her, and she let herself hang more heavily in the hollow of his arm. She smelt the hay, and something yearned in her and was afraid.

"Tired, Mary?" he asked solicitously.

"Just a little."

"We'll find a seat."

He sat down on a haycock, and held her hands. She felt the draw of them as she stood, and was both thrilled and dismayed.

"My darling——"

She melted, went limp of a sudden. He had her on his knees and in his arms. He was kissing her mouth and her eyes.

"My little wife."

He laid her gently on the hay. It was soft, and smelt sweet. The sun seemed to linger in it, and her languor was like the dusk, sinking into secret and shadowy completeness. He was bending over her, looking into her eyes.

"Mary——"

For a moment, on that soft June bed, pressed into the tumbled fragrance of it, she forgot to feel afraid.

WHEN she left him at the Six Firs, Mary fled down the Melhurst road in a panic. She felt sure that her hair was full of hay, though she had shaken it, and—dissembling her terror—had made her lover comb it with his fingers. Yes, they had been very near the edge of things. But suddenly she had struggled up, and had begun to laugh a little hysterically, and to tease him and throw the dry grass in his face.

"Oh, Arnold! What a couple of romping children."

She had recovered herself and her breath. "Oh, I must go home now. They will be wondering." But all the way to the Melhurst road she had trembled at the dark places and at the possible descent upon her of a second crisis.

So, when he had kissed her good night, she ran down the road on the slim legs of a scared and flying virgin. Having begun her running she kept it up. The physical act spilled over into mental movement. She sidled along the Cinder Town fences like any little wench returning after a breathless adventure. She found the old people sitting up and making a state affair of it.

"You are very late, Mary," said her mother.

"Am I? I had no watch. And these long evenings——"

Her people were going to bed. "Good night, Mary."

When they had gone she showed no hesitation. The whole plan had crystalized and deposited itself upon the thread of panic running through her mood. She sat down at the writing table in the window, and wrote a letter to her parents. It covered three sheets. It was a little hysterical; it accused herself and Furze and everybody; it justified her running away by insisting on her not being able to help it. She said that she was writing to Arnold Furze, but that she did not wish him to know where she was or what had become of her.

When all was quiet she went upstairs, taking the letter with her. From under her bed she routed out an old green suitcase, and set about filling it. She was quite deliberate, and rather pleasantly self-conscious. She was enjoying a little piece of sensationalism.

She undressed, set her alarm clock for

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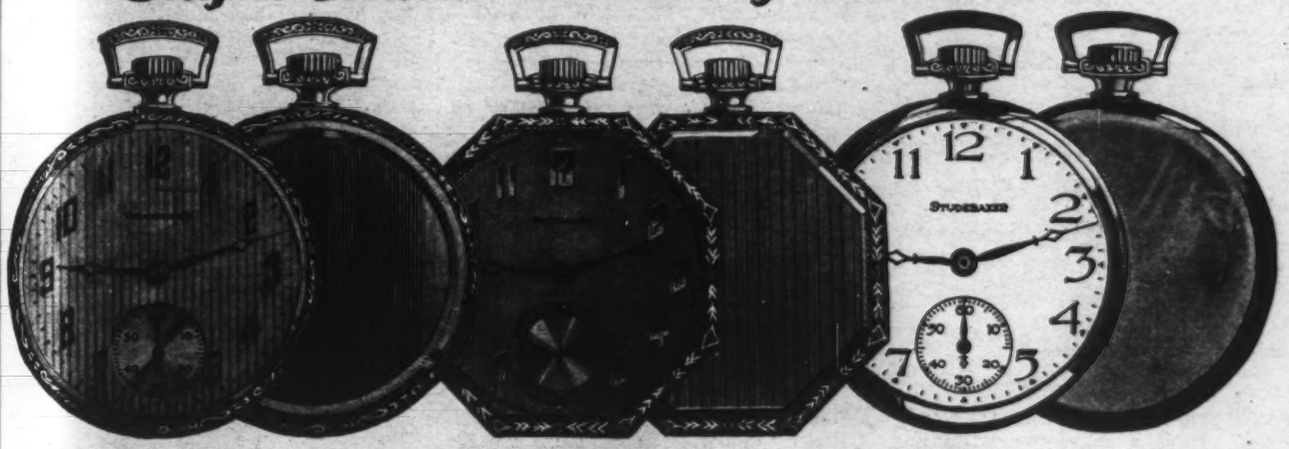

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five, and got into bed. She did not expect to sleep, but sleep she did, to be roused by the whirring clock. The morning's adventure rushed into her brain with instant clearness, and possessed it. She had a pound note, three shillings, and five pence in pennies. She dressed. She completed her packing.

The letter was left outside the door of her people's bedroom. No one saw her flight from Cinder Town, or met her walking to Carslake station.

NEXT MONTH

Mary goes through an entirely new experience. She finds herself in the midst of luxurious living and is tempted by the attentions of a millionaire. Meanwhile Arnold, at Doomsday, faces more bad luck on the farm, and hopes against hope that Mary will have her fling and return to him.

Diary of a Little French Girl

—Continued from page 19

worker!" said Ethel, and then everybody laughed. It is a joke, but I do not know it.

Although I have hardly met him yet, I know already what I cannot expect from him. Generosity, approval, admiration or moral support.

I have always felt that a man who wears a white tie in the daytime is not to be trusted with a pretty woman.

Mr. Kingsley has a good mind and a good heart. But this poor little goat in Wolfe's clothing would demand his pound of flesh while talking of saving souls.

RE the Millinery.

The French copies I found excellent. And when they asked me what I thought of the American originals, and I said, "I find them very original," everybody was satisfied.

RE the Lingerie.

In the Lingerie Department hope was rampart. And not only hope must the customers have who buy these gaily trimmed trifles, but a great faith. And maybe, I thought, some also have an infinite charity. A woman wearing lingerie of that description certainly gives herself away. For in the cheap imitation laces, baby frills, and bold-patterned chiffons was everything a gentlewoman does not wear.

"Your customers—do they never demand fine needlework?" I asked finally.

"Oh! that is in the French lingerie room."

And there, *Dieu Merci,* was a collection of such exquisitely fine pieces that my heart was again made glad. It was so perfect it made one dream of beauty. After all, from lingerie to love is a very little step, I reflected. But cheap lingerie suggests not a delicate deliberate step—merely a common slip.

I turned to the buyer, Mrs. Charles, a large and gracious woman. "Looking at the display of lingerie in these two departments, which country would you consider the more immoral, your America or my France?"

"You have the reputation, *madame!*" she replied, laughing, which made me think—how can the world ever know the truth about women. Beneath our gowns we are all different. Yet, they say, beneath the skin all women are alike . . . No wonder the poor men don't know how to take us.

RE the President. Friday Night.

Exactly one week in the store and the president, M. Kingsley, has today put the acid on me! That is what Ethel calls it. I knew though, it was the acid because he was so stirred up and uncomfortable. Besides, when a huge man like Mr. Kingsley tries to whisper in an empty room, you know he has something on his mind.

This *tête à tête* took place in my salon. The closing bell at five-thirty had rung about five minutes previously, and since a fire could not get rid of the girls quicker than that bell, there was nobody about.

Mr. Kingsley is a clever man at business affairs, but in the affairs of the heart, ah, *Mon Dieu!* but he is a veritable infant. These successful American men may know how to "make good," but they certainly don't know how to make love. If it had not been for his eyes and his funny manner, I would not even have guessed that he was talking of love. For these, figure to yourself, are the words he used in which to clothe the "grand passion" and hand it to me.

"Madame de Soie. I have been wanting to ask you something for some time. Will you have dinner with me? The weather is getting warm now, and I thought we might drive out of town some place."

I appeared to be thinking. "Alone?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied. And we understood one another perfectly. I placed my hand for an instant on his arm. I like this large man. He is very human, *bien entendu,* but he is kind and very intelligent.

"I would love to go Mr. Kingsley," I said, "but I shall not. I am not clever enough to mix pleasure with business." There was a pause . . .

"I would like you to meet my wife," he said finally. *Mon Dieu!* Then I, who thought I knew men, was founded dumb. Or is it dumb founded? Such transparency in a man is very disconcerting.

"Ah! Monsieur Kingsley, I thank you for a very charming compliment."

"Then we may expect you one evening next week? My wife will telephone you."

"No, please no! I beg of you to excuse me."

"We are quite nice people," he said a little doubtfully, and I knew then that he did not understand the reason of this second refusal.

Yet how could I tell him my meaning?

"Perhaps that is the trouble," I said, laughing.

Kingsley picked up his papers and held out his hand.

"You are not insulted, I hope?"

"Did you intend to insult me?"

He smiled at that, satisfied. His dignity was safe in my hands. And he knew it. If he had been a Frenchman he would have kissed my hand. Instead, on the impulse of friendliness, he patted my cheek, and just at the moment I saw Mr. Wolfe at the door of my salon.

Re the Little Wolfe.

When I saw that little Wolfe standing sheepishly at the door, I said at once.

"Come in Mr. Wolfe. What can I do for you?"

"I was looking for Mr. Kingsley."

"Well, you got him." Then I turned smiling to the president. "Please thank Madame Kingsley very much for her so kind invitation, and tell her that either Thursday or Friday evening I will be enchanted to meet her."

"She will 'phone you at the Ritz," said Kingsley with his usual dignity. Then to Wolfe—"See you in the morning Wolfe." And with that he stepped on some gas and was gone.

"A kind man and a gentleman, that Monsieur Kingsley," I said, putting on my hat. "What is his wife like, M. Wolfe?" He turned to go. "A large woman," he said in his irritating way.

"She would need to be. Ah! please wait and take me out. I never have been so late."

Oh, *la la!* but this was fun. The last thing he would want was to be seen with me so late.

Quickly I put out the lights, and then taking a little rose from the vase, I rushed to him and before he knew what I did, I was pinning it in his coat lapel. I knew he would be too afraid to touch me.

"Tush, tush," he said pettishly, "I don't like flowers."

I patted it in place.

"You fool the world but you can't fool me. You do love flowers. You have a heart that is full of sentiment. Oh! but full to bursting, M. Wolfe. And when the same man has also great business genius, the result is very subtle."

"Flattery! Flattery!" he said tersely, but he did not repulse me when I put my hand upon his arm.

Walking side by side through the huge

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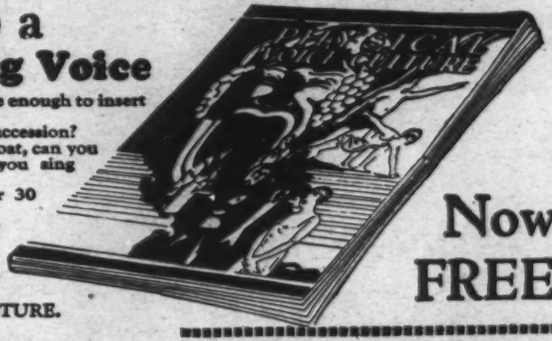

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department with its finery laid out on the counters, looking like the corpse of its daytime self beneath its white sheets, I praised the store. Then: "Ah! the elevator runs. I too will run. Goodnight, M. Wolfe. Thank you!"

"Goodnight, Madame de Soie," he said formally, and a moment later his little body was lost like a shadow amongst the show cases.

"Ah! M. Wolfe," I reflected, "I am holding you at bay, but, somehow, I know you are but waiting . . . I feel it in my bones."

An whenever I have felt in my bones that a man was waiting for me I have never been disappointed.

Well, M. Wolfe, we shall see . . .

NEXT MONTH

Mousseline does see—It is M. Wolfe, the crafty, who is kept in the dark by this wholly captivating little French girl. She continues her vivacious and amusing diary in the October issue of McCLURE'S.

Summer Bachelors

—Continued from page 57

midnight—with all hands expected on deck."

"They can have it without me then."

"Sick?" asked her solicitous friend.

"Bored."

"Worse, but not fatal. Go ahead and sleep it off."

Easy to say; not so easy to do, Derry found it. At three o'clock she answered the chime of the clock, by rolling out of bed with a lively curse, and creeping down through the stilled house to consult the stars upon the best antidote for an exasperated insomnia.

That they imparted to her some valuable secret is proven by the fact that she was still asleep the next noon when Willowdean came yawning in with the breakfast tray.

"What time did you get to bed?" Derry asked her.

"No time to speak of. Blackie and I sneaked a sailboat and went out and owned the lake. He had to leave today."

"You didn't own all of it," Derry grinned.

"Were you out, too? We didn't see any other boat."

"I wasn't in a boat. I took a little swim out around the island."

"Derry! It's a mile there and back. Were you alone?"

"Naturally. Did you think I organized a party?"

"Nobody but you would be batty enough to take such a chance. Suppose you should get a cramp?"

"Then I'd end my vacation a few weeks earlier than was planned," was the cool reply. "You can come with me tonight, if you like."

"I? Br-rr-rrhoo! I couldn't swim a stroke in that black water. Derry, promise me you won't try it again."

"I'll promise you I will!"

Willowdean gave up. "Have it your own way, but get up, anyhow. It's the fishing party this afternoon; biggest fish wins a case of champagne; smallest, a bottle of near-beer." She consulted a slip of paper. "You've drawn Hornblow Reef and your shipmate is Ken Waring. Keep him at the other end of the boat; he's sudden. I had a short sit-out with him last night."

"Who's yours?"

"Oh, I'm in luck. I get old Prenny. Tony's drawn a wild young flapper from the club; she'll give him a time keeping his boat on an even keel."

Whatever the purpose of this information, it did not please Derry to observe that the flapper, whom she heard Tony address as Amy in what seemed a prematurely familiar fashion, was piquantly pretty and obviously pleased with her companion.

The pair anchored within sight of the reef allotted to Derry and young Waring. They seemed to be having a quite chummy time, but, the furtive watcher judged, not to be catching many fish, for they presently weighed anchor and disappeared. Thereupon Derry set herself conscientiously to flirt with her shipmate.

But, though he played back with enthusiasm, there was no conviction in her performance, and she was wondering, in dismay, whether she was losing her technique, when Tony and his flapper reappeared around the bend. After that it went better. Having an audience to play to does make a difference!

However, this audience made no subsequent comment on the little comedy; that is, the important member of the audience did not. He came over to her at cocktail time and congratulated her on having caught the next to the biggest fish.

"Thanks, but I never could see much in this second-best business," said Derry calmly.

He gave her one quick, inquiring glance, then settled down to be chatty. That was the word; chatty. And neutral. And in the evening he took the pretty flapper out sailing, which was all right if he wanted to do it. Of course. And obviously he did want to, or he wouldn't have done it. Well, two could play at that game. But it seemed that Tony could play at it with more zest than she could. It wasn't fair.

DERRY resumed her role of universal favorite and danced every dance that evening. By midnight she had had enough. Yet when she crawled into bed at one o'clock, spent and weary, it did not add to her peace of mind to realize that she had not seen Tony and the Amy girl come in.

As a matter of fact, that sailing trip was long since over, Tony having landed his fair passenger at the dock and having been, himself, intercepted by Willowdean, self-appointed Assistant Manager of Fate.

"You needn't overdo this thing, you know, Tony," she warned. "That's a rash voyage for an unprotected, inexperienced youth like you."

"I can still look you fearlessly in the eye, Willowdean," he asseverated solemnly, "and tell you to go right to hell."

"Didn't the frantic flapper even make love to you?"

"Oh, she's all right of her kind. Nobody has to worry about her."

"I'm worrying a little about Derry. I think it's time you took a hand."

His face hardened. "You know I won't lift a finger, until she comes to me of her own free will. How could I, now?"

"Oh, don't be so dam' knightly, Tony! Not even if——"

"Not even if anything. If she cares enough for some one else——"

"Not even if her life is in danger?"

"What's this—melodrama?" growled Tony. "Excuse me, Billy, my nerves have rather gone to frazz-ends lately and taken my manners with 'em. . . . You're laughing at me, you girl-devil!"

"Because you went rushing off on a false trail. Derry's taken to dead-of-night swimming." She recounted the episode. "She threatens to repeat tonight."

"Can't you stop her?"

"I don't know how I can."

"Then I certainly couldn't. If I undertook to prevent her she'd only——"

"Of course she would. But there are times when a pound of cure is worth an ounce of prevention."

"I think I begin to see. I'm a pretty good swimmer, myself. And I've been known to suffer from insomnia, after several cups of black coffee."

"Verbum saphead! You aren't such a total loss. Good luck, by land and sea!"

The night came on, murky and thick with a darkness in which vagrant gusts of wind moved, purposeless as ghosts; the kind of night that weighs down upon a fevered mind, heating it to unendurable restlessness. Derry crept cautiously from her bed and looked out. There was but one point in the all-absorbent darkness; a single small light glowed at the pier head; somewhere below it the float lay in black shadow, lapped and lifted by the small waves. Out beyond waited appeasement, relief, release. She thrust her feet into a pair of pads, drew a dressing gown around her, tiptoed down the stairs, and drifted through a half open window, a creature as light, as much a part of the embracing, caressing night as the little whispering winds themselves. Like a wraith she sped across the lawn, along the beach, out to the float. As the smothering, cramping shell falls from the released, outspread wings of the emerging moth, she thrust out from her enwrap-

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ments, and the cool, dark waters took her into their soothing, liquid embrace.

The island lay, still and lifeless, as she rounded it. What a turmoil she could raise among the half dozen sleepers there by lifting her voice in one mad, eldritch shriek. Perhaps she could endow that unhaunted locality with a ghost of its very own! The strength of the temptation testified to her vitality, her hold on life. She had almost yielded, was ready to draw breath for the eerie challenge, when an uneasy tingly impression was born in upon her that she didn't have the lake entirely to herself. She turned on her back and waited. Something vague and bulky disturbed the face of the waters a little back of her. No small and playful fish, this! A sick, chill terror darted in her blood. Sharks! was her instinctive, unreasoning fear. Idiot! the second thought followed. There are no sharks in inland waters; no fish as big as—as a man, for instance, nor as dangerous. She called softly:

"Who's there?"

Tony's voice answered at once. "All right. Sorry. I didn't mean to bother you."

"Don't apologize. It isn't my lake."

"Shall I follow, at a respectful distance?"

She considered the discreet, cloaking darkness in which her own arms were but the vaguest shadow to her eyes. "No. Come alongside."

"Tired?" he asked as he swam up.

"Not a bit. Race you around the island."

At the far point she turned and floated, three yards in the lead.

"You're good," he said.

"You could have beaten me easily. I watched your stroke."

"Not at all. I did my best."

"Liar! Polite as always. I'm going back."

"May I come along?"

"Freedom of the seas."

"Do you mind? You might get a cramp, you know."

"How considerate! Come as far as the pier-head, if you like."

Polite as always! And he could continue to be polite, in this soft darkness that enveloped him, that shut them in together, alone in a hidden universe! He would keep it up until the end. What end? . . . He shouldn't! Not if she could shake him out of that complacent courtliness! At what she judged from the small deceptive pin-point of the pier-light, to be a hundred yards out, she turned, floundered, threw up her arms.

"Derry!" he cried, and plunged for her, and in the quick terror of his voice was everything that she yearned to hear.

Her wide clasp closed on him, drew him down. Her lips met his and clung to them, as she felt the unresisting waters divide and enfold. Then—anticlimax!

HER feet touched ground. She had misreckoned her distance and the depth. Her head was lifted back into air again, and she clung, helpless in his arms, surcharged through every nerve with the welding white fire of his kiss. She drew back for a breath.

"If you let me go now," she whispered, "I'll just crumple."

"I'm never going to let you go."

"Oh, yes, you are, Tony dear," she breathed uncertainly, "in just a minute. Right here. I—I'm not dressed for shallow water."

"Did you have a cramp?"

"No. I did it on purpose. I thought it was deeper."

"On purpose," he repeated slowly. "Did you mean to drown us?"

"Would you have cared?"

"When I felt your lips I didn't think or care about anything."

"It was just a silly test. I wanted to see how long I could hold you with a kiss. A test, Tony."

"I love you," he said.

"And I love you," she whispered. "That's the answer, I suppose. I don't know what it means though."

"I do."

Now, if he thinks I'm going to marry him—thought Derry rapidly—he's wrong. Though maybe if he held my head under water until I promised to, I wouldn't be sorry; not just now. But I'd go back on it tomorrow.

"Don't be too sure that you do," she warned. She freed herself from him.

"Mayn't I come in with you?" he pleaded.

"I tell you no!" she cried, half-laughing. "Every stitch I've got is on the float."

"I'll duck under till you put 'em on."

"No, dear one. Not tonight. Tomorrow."

"I leave tomorrow—have to."

"What time?"

"Early train. Before you're up."

"But you could come back."

"If you send for me."

"Good night, then." She did not dare trust herself to kiss him again. A dim, white streak, she darted from him, to reappear at the float. "Swim carefully, Tony. I don't want to lose you *now*."

AS he lay over in the water she hailed him softly. "There'll be a message for you in the morning. Be sure you read it right."

The message was at his breakfast place; an envelope enclosing a check for $32.40, signed with the unfamiliar name, Desideria Thomas. That was all.

Derry, sensitized to him even in her sleep, heard the humming of his car beneath her window, and crept out of bed to see him go, keeping herself unseen. Leaning against the lintel, she was aware of a keen stab of pain through her shoulder. She pushed back the sleeve of her night dress, revealing an angry purple area of bruised flesh, evidence of the terrified strength of Tony's grip when he had first caught her sinking.

She frowned at the spot, touched it with light, exploratory fingers, then, twisting herself like a kitten, laid her lips softly to it. Flaming, she withdrew them, told herself that she was a despicable woman creature; had a second thought to the effect that, after all, it was not wholly despicable to be a woman creature, even to that extent; in fact she rather liked it.

There followed a secondary wave of feeling, new and strange and disturbing. Though it grew out of the physical hurt it was something more than physical, this tenderness that surged through her, and softened her to yearning. Let Tony hurt her! There was nothing she would not undergo or endure for love of him now.

CHAPTER XX

TELEPHONE for Miss Thomas. Before she was fairly awake, Derry knew who it must be. Tony would call her, the instant he reached New York. Always the right thing from Tony, though by no means always the expected thing. His voice, tender and teasing, came to her over the wire.

"Did I wake you up?"

"Indeed you did. It's only noon."

"Do you mind very much?"

"Not if you've got a good excuse."

"I have. Something very important to say to you."

"But I know what it is," returned happily impudent Derry.

"In that case there's no need of my saying it."

"Oh, I think you'd better!" she said hastily.

His half whisper ran from the wire through her nerves, both a stimulus and an appeasement to her want of him. "Did you get it?" he asked.

"Yes. I liked it."

"You were meant to," he laughed. "Any answer?"

"I'll tell you when I see you."

"When'll that be?"

"Not for several days. I've got to go on to Montreal, on business."

Suppose he offered to come up and take her there? She grew tingly and weak at the thought of it. No! Not that journey with Tony! She had so nearly taken it with Bev, but for his mysterious defection, the explanation of which she intended yet to get out of somebody. Would she really have carried through the plan, when the time came? She doubted it now. Even then, though she realized it far less than since the encounter in the lake, her feeling for Tony must have been strong enough to have been a dividing sword between her and any other man . . . But what was Tony saying?

"Yes . . . Hello! . . . I'm here," she answered confusedly. "Coming back? Oh, Claire has asked me to stop here over next week end, on my way back?"

"Am I going to be invited?"

"Perhaps. If you promise to be very good."

"Depends on the definition."

"Oh, it won't be too severe," laughed Derry. "But, Tony," she had become serious, "I don't want to be bothered and worried, by—by anything," she finished lamely.

"By my insisting on your marrying me," he interpreted.

"Yes."

"I haven't the slightest intention of ever again asking you to marry me."

"Oh!" said Derry flatly. It had slipped out before she meant it to. "That's a dear," she added hastily.

"Because a girl tries to drown a man and then they kiss each other at the bottom of the sea, it doesn't necessarily follow that they're obliged to dash into matrimony, you know."

"Don't tease me, Tony."

"Oh, my dear!" he said in a tone so

profoundly altered that she felt better. "But you might tell me one thing," he added, "before we drop the subject forever."

"Possibly I might," Derry answered.

"What is your deep-rooted objection to marrying me in particular?"

"I don't believe in marriage; it doesn't work. Anyway, there are forty good reasons why I shouldn't marry you or any one else, and I'm—not—going—to. So that's that. Understood?"

"Comprehended, accepted and filed. Anything else?"

"Did you get my message?" she asked after a pause.

"I did. I'll give you a receipt later."

"Did you know what it meant?"

"I think so."

"Aren't you clever!" she gibed. "I'll bet you haven't any idea."

"It meant, as I read between the slightly shaky lines——"

"They *weren't* shaky," declared Derry indignantly.

"—that, whatever happens now, we start even on the new deal. Right?"

"You know too darn much, Tony Landor! Heaven pity your wife, when you find one. She won't be able to get away with anything! Good-bye old Wisdom."

"Good-bye, young Beauty."

YOUNG BEAUTY! Derry loved it, crowed over it privately as she went back to her dressing. Was she beautiful? Some one had once said to her—Prenny Smith, wasn't it—that a woman must love to come to her full development of beauty . . .

What was on for today? Not that she much cared, but one had to keep going at Go As You Please. The emblem of the place ought to be a spur. Derry went into the next room to consult Willowdean, and found a maid, dusting and setting to rights.

"How long has Miss French been up?"

"Since ten o'clock, mum."

Derry was surprised. Early hours for Willowdean. "Did she leave any word?"

"Said to tell you she wouldn't be back to lunch. She went out with a lady, mum."

Further surprise. "A lady? One of the ladies here?"

"No, mum. A lady called for her in a car. A Mrs. Black—no; Blake or somethin' like it."

"Not Blakely!" Derry's heart felt as if a small icicle had given it a gentle warning poke.

"Yes'm. That was it."

Blackie's wife. How had she come there? For what possible purpose, but one? Why hadn't Willowdean told her, before going? What was poor Deenie going through now? If the woman couldn't keep her husband, wouldn't even stay in town and look after him, thought Derry savagely, what right had she to assert her claim against a love willing and glad to sacrifice anything, everything! Marriage! . . . Chancing upon Preston Smith she got him aside.

"What's Blackie's wife doing here?"

"Here?" His chubby, good-humored face became anxious and grim. "Has she come here?"

"She's with Willowdean."

"Bad news! Their place is across the mountain. She may have heard from

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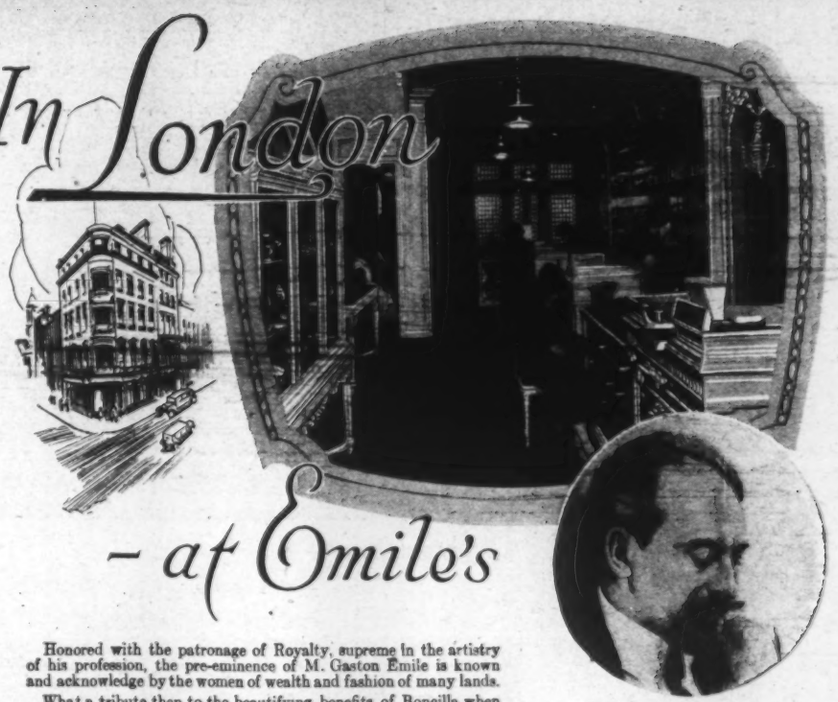

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(Letters from Lovers: I)

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some one at the club that Blackie was here——"

"No. She called for Deenie. I don't like it, Prenny."

"Nor do I. Women!" He threw up his hands. "I could call up Blackie . . . No, better let it run."

Never had Derry been more hard put to it than to keep up to her expected part, that endless afternoon. Three o'clock came, four, four-thirty, and no Willowdean. Going to her room to change into bathing clothes for the pre-cocktail swim, Derry heard a movement in the next room. She knocked and entered.

"Deenie, how did you come in?"

"The back way. I didn't want to see any one."

"I know where you've been, old girl," said Derry gently. "It was Blackie's wife, wasn't it?"

"No. Worse. His mother."

"Did she know?" asked Derry, appalled.

"Yes. Everything."

"Do you want to tell me, Deenie, dear?"

"Yes, I think so. Perhaps you can help me understand. It's all numb in my head." She spoke in an even, dulled, rigid, spaced, confidential monotone, like a slow-witted pupil repeating a lesson. "Blackie's wife—it isn't her fault."

"Of course it is! Why did she leave him? Claire says she's just a little frivvle."

"No. She isn't that. She can't help being what she is. She can't help not being what she isn't. None of us can."

Derry recalled Tony's analysis of the type. "What do you know about her?"

"She isn't complete. She doesn't know what womanhood really is. Mrs. Blakely told me everything. She—Blackie's wife, I mean—is one of those queer, half-women that never ought to marry. It isn't her fault. She does love him, in her way. That's the tragedy of it. She is wrapped up in his career, his success. But she's half an invalid."

"But he can't love her; can't ever have loved her," burst out Derry.

"No. How could he! He loves me. That's why I've got to give him up."

"I wouldn't," cried Derry.

"Yes. Not for her. For himself. The university authorities have heard about us——"

"I told you you were acting like a pair of reckless fools."

"I suppose so. Her uncle is a trustee, and—and it means his position and his work, his whole life, if he doesn't give me up."

"He never will, if the choice is given him."

"It won't be. I'm going to give him up. I've promised."

"Mrs. Blakely? What did she do to you? She must be a terrible old woman."

"Oh, no!" For the first time Willowdean's rigid voice softened. "She's very gentle, and very sad, and quite wonderful. Blackie's all she's got. The other two sons were killed in the war, and Blackie was badly gassed, so that they thought he was going, too. She has such a frail hold on life, Derry. It would kill her if scandal were to touch him."

"Does she know that you and Blackie love each other? That it isn't only——"

"Oh, yes! She understands. She is one of those people who understand everything."

Derry was impressed. "She must be wonderful, as you say."

"When I got out of the car," said Willowdean slowly, "she held me for a minute and said: 'My dear, I wish it could have been you. Life is hard on women!' Then she kissed me. Blackie's mother kissed me. She couldn't have done that if she had thought I was really bad. Could she, Derry?"

Derry grabbed her in a fierce, straining hug. "It's rotten!" she cried. "The whole thing is rotten. Aren't you going to see him again?"

"Yes. I'm to see him once more. That's understood. I didn't even have to ask her for that. She said, herself, that I must see him once again."

"It's going to tear him to pieces."

A SPASM of pain contracted the still face. "No," said the girl with a queer, determined intonation. "I'll take the hurt of it. It shan't hurt him—not as it hurts us women. That's what women are for, to be hurt by love."

Loud, imperative voices from the lawn below summoned Derry, demanded to know where Willowdean was, and why she had not shown up.

"You stay where you are," Derry bade her. "I'll make up some lie for you."

"No. I'm coming down. Might as well begin to face the game now." Willowdean began to change her dress, with the grim resolution of her profession, which is steeled to play its part with a smile to cover any agony. Said Derry impulsively:

"Blackie'll never let you go, Deenie."

"He'll have to," answered the other, with such sad conviction that wonder and a grim suspicion woke within Derry's brain.

She almost said aloud, "Tony wouldn't," so vividly had the inner assurance answered to the other's despair, as her woman's heart veered, in magnetized obedience, to the tender and triumphant thought of the man she loved.

NEXT MONTH

Derry's belief that Tony will never let her go is put to the test in the closing chapters of "Summer Bachelors," and the mystery of her strange hypnotic trance is finally revealed: bringing to a satisfying conclusion this most vivid and unusual story by the author of "Flaming Youth."

The Little Baggage

—Continued from page 23

flanking party less than two hundred yards away and the main body thundering on behind them. They spurred their sobbing horses to a final burst of effort up the slope. Then Tug Slaughter's mount collapsed and went down with a bullet through its spine.

"Grab my stirrup," a voice bade him when he scrambled to his feet. He seized his rifle with one hand and the other gripped the leather as Morg Williams swept by him. A moment later the two of them were on their bellies in the bottom of the wallow which the bulls of many a herd had gouged deeper every springtime. The fifty calibre buffalo guns lifted their deep voices above the tumult of smaller weapons and a score of Comanches who had gained the bottom of the hill whirled their ponies, scudding back to their companions.

A broad band of crimson lay along the eastern horizon, as the Comanches gathered on the flat for the rush which was to exterminate the pair in the wallow on the hilltop. In the mellow light which stole over the uplands the stark torsos of the warriors gleamed like old copper. Weird patterns in yellow and black and vermillion stood out against the background. Feathered warbonnets and festoons of dyed scalp locks fluttered in the morning breeze. A tall, lean chief, decked out in all the warpath's gaudy panoply, rode back and forth before their line; his headdress of eagle plumes was fronted by two buffalo horns, polished deep ebony.

Tug Slaughter and Morg Williams crouched in the wallow at the knoll's crest, digging away the earth with their broad-bladed butcher knives. Their flannel shirts and limp-rimmed hats were stained by dust and perspiration. Their faces were drawn with the weariness of their long ride. A dingy pair; here underneath the flushing sky they looked very small and very lonely—poor contrast to the two hundred warriors on the flat beneath them. But the long-barreled fifty calibre rifles which lay beside them in the shallow pit were deadly at more than a thousand yards, and the placing of the huge slugs with absolute exactness into moving targets at far distances was the daily calling of their owners; while the Comanches knew but little of the art of marksmanship, and in the heat of action practiced even less. Their manner of warfare was based on the traditions of the bow and arrow and the lance. It was hedged round by ceremonial.

The lean chief brandished his rifle high above his head. The line swept across the flat at the dead run. The drumming of the bare hoofs on the tough sod was like rolling thunder. The ululating war-whoop of the Comanches throbbed, shrill above it. The feathered bonnets of the bucks were tossing up and down to the movement of their ponies. Whisps of powder smoke rose from the crest of the hill and dissolved in the breeze.

The charge thundered up the slope and it seemed as if it were about to sweep straight on over the crest—a swirling flood of savage men and frenzied horses

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which would obliterate the wallow and its occupants. Then, half way to the summit, it split. The shallow pit where Tug Slaughter and Morg Williams were lying became the center of a circle, whose circumference was twenty yards below—two rings of mustangs rushing by in opposite directions; with here and there a bronze leg showing, clamped down upon a pony's back, and here and there a face, bedaubed with hideous patterns of war-paint, thrust under the animal's outstretched neck. The circle blossomed smoke puffs; they smeared its flanks in a thick cloud. Moments came when the riders drew in closer; the dust and powder fumes united in a stifling cloud, through which the flashes of the rifles leaped on every side; and the noise of the firing swelled to a deafening crescendo. Always the booming of the two buffalo guns continued at the wallow's edge, unhurried as the speech of an old man. Then abruptly the turmoil lessened.

TUG SLAUGHTER laid down his rifle and pulled his chewing tobacco from his pocket. He whittled off a chunk with his butcher knife and tucked it into his cheek. His eyes were two oblique black slits under his tangled forelock.

"Reckon they'll come back soon?" he asked. Morg Williams nodded; the gray of his eyes were like the gray of burnished steel as he regarded the line, already in the process of reforming on the plain below them.

"But, ef we stand 'em off this time, they won't be so damn anxious fer a while."

As he spoke the second rush began. There came periods when the circle of racing ponies drew in and in, until the rising of the red flood over the wallow's banks seemed inevitable. But the long-barreled buffalo guns continued taking their slow toll; and at the last moment the traditions of their fathers and their fathers' fathers, which forbade unnecessary loss of warriors, had its way with the Comanches. So in the end the circle always widened, and presently it dissolved as it had before. And now its members settled down to make a day of it. The sun was climbing in the eastern sky. The project of Casa Amarillo was forgotten. The idea was to get the scalps of these formidable white warriors in payment for their own dead.

So the sun mounted above them and the day grew hot and the fighting dragged along. Sometimes at long range. Sometimes, after the lean chief had ridden back and forth before them, stinging them by foul abuse to a fresh access of effort, the yelling warriors would close in again pouring a stream of leaden slugs at the wallow above them. Then when the deadliness of the big single shot rifles had become too great an ordeal, they would draw off to the plain, and listen to their leader asking them if they were women.

It was near noon and the noise of retreating hoofs was growing fainter after one of these brief advances, when Tug Slaughter looked around and saw Morg Williams lying in the bottom of the wallow with a red patch spreading over the faded blue bosom of his flannel shirt. He opened the garment and looked upon a ragged hole through which the air was whistling at every breath. While he was tamping his handkerchief into the wound with the blade of his butcher knife, the other opened his eyes.

"Help me up where I can use my rifle," he whispered. Then he fainted again.

Tug Slaughter dashed his sleeve across his brow to clear his tangled forelock from before his eyes.

"The's a two quart canteen half full down there on my daid hoss," he muttered. A moment later he was running down the hill. Out on the flat the rifles rattled; the dust rose from the trampled sod around him in little puffs. He came straight on, unheeding. While he was bending over the body of the horse, half a dozen of the younger warriors came quirting their ponies toward the spot. He started back up the slope with the canteen slung over his shoulder and when he was half way to the wallow, he pitched forward upon his face. A whoop rose from the speeding riders down below him on the flat.

Then, as they leaned forward on their mustangs' backs, a thin white whisp of smoke appeared beside the wallow's bank, and the rifle of Morg Williams boomed dull answer to their yell of exultation. A pony lay among the tawny grass tufts kicking in its death agony. The buffalo gun on the hilltop boomed again and then once more. Tug Slaughter was crawling up the slope. Down on the flat the four surviving riders were scudding back to the main body of the Indians. The Sharp's was silent now. When he had hitched himself across the wallow's edge:

"Laig's busted," Tug Slaughter announced, but Morg Williams made no reply. He was crouching, as the last swoon had caught him, with his rifle in his arms.

"I reckon I got to play a lone hand now," Tug Slaughter said.

THE Comanches were forming for another rush. He could see the tall chief riding back and forth along their front, the feathers of his great warbonnet flashing in the wind, the sun glinting dully on the two buffalo horns. A remote form, tiny with distance, save for these specks of high light. Great beads of sweat stood out upon the white man's forehead as he dragged his broken leg behind him, hitching himself painfully closer to the wallow's bank.

"More'n six hundred yards," he muttered, "but I have dropped a bull at better than eight hundred."

The barrel of his rifle rested on the earth. He edged his body a little higher and the movement brought a sharp stab of pain. His lips went tight and he pressed the walnut stock against his shoulder; his cheek caressed its polished surface. His eye sought the notch of the rear sight. His finger squeezed the trigger. The big Sharp's boomed. The smoke wreath cleared away before its muzzle.

"Overshot like a green kid," Tug Slaughter told himself. He ejected the shell and shoved in another. The muzzle drew down, and down. It hung motionless. A jet of flame leaped forth. The

warbonnet of the chief fluttered wildly in the wind as he pitched from his pony's back.

Morg Williams awakened from his swoon in the bottom of the wallow a half an hour later. Water was splashing over his chest and he felt the neck of the canteen between his teeth. He looked up into Tug Slaughter's face. What he saw there he could not understand at first. Then the other explained.

"Two troops of cavalry a comin' on the run," said Tug Slaughter. "The fun is over."

THAT was, as has been said, in June. Summer heat was still upon the land and the two troops of cavalry were still busy rounding up the renegades, when the wounded pair began to move about a little.

The surgeon who was with the expedition used to wonder at the solicitude they showed during those days of convalescence in asking after each other. Then, one morning, in violation of the surgeon's orders, Morg Williams left his tent. Search through the camp failed to discover him. When Tug Slaughter heard the news, he limped down to the picket line and stole a troop horse. The Plaza Paloduro was five miles away; he made the distance in what would have been fast time for a sound man and hobbled across the little Plaza just as Morg Williams was nearing the doorway of Snake Thompson's house.

"Last time I seen yo' here," Tug Slaughter drawled, "yo' started out to make me a proposition."

The gray of Morg Williams' eyes was like the gray of burnished steel as they met the speaker's angry gaze.

"What I was going to say—the two of us stand back to back; when I give the word each of us take five paces; then turn and begin shootin'."

"Suits me," Tug Slaughter answered, and they were in the midst of their arrangements when they were interrupted again—as they had been before—by a loud outcry. This time it was Snake Thompson; he came forth from his house and his voice broke under the burden of his distress as he ran up to them.

"Me," he proclaimed, "I been robbed. That feller Pedro done lit out las' night an' tuk five hundred dollars."

The pair in the Plaza turned unsympathetic faces to him and bade him take his troubles elsewhere, but he went on regardless of their curt command, ignoring the six-shooters in their hands, wrapped up in his own calamity.

"An' that ain't all. Maria, she done run away along with him."

That evening in the cavalry camp down by the river the commanding officer was sitting in his tent, when a sunburned young lieutenant dropped in on his way back from the Plaza Paloduro.

"I understand," the colonel said, "there was some shooting up there at the settlement." The subaltern smiled as he answered.

"Nothing serious, sir. Just those two buffalo hunters. They're both of 'em full of Snake Thompson's whiskey and they were celebrating their recovery by shooting up the town."

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Gold Medal Won 1923

A Husband's Spots

—Continued from page 31

she sat on the bed and laid her cheek tenderly against the pillow.

Sitting up, she looked at her watch. It was after eleven. If Cress had gone to the theater he would be in soon. She decided to elaborate her surprise. Cress should find her in bed. She laughed aloud at the thought of his astonishment. She undressed hurriedly, remembering to hide all her clothes carefully out of sight. Then she switched out all the lights and slipped in between the cool sheets.

The sharp bang of a closing door woke her. Incredibly she had fallen asleep. Cress! That was Cress out there in the living room. In another moment he would find her. She sat up, eagerly expectant. It was difficult to suppress a ridiculous desire to laugh.

The light went up suddenly in the outer room. After a moment she heard him rattle the telephone.

"You said some one was up here," she heard him say. "There's no one here."

There was a brief pause, then the sound of the receiver banged down on the hook. The lights snapped out and in a rush Cress made his way into the bedroom. Through the heavy darkness he ran across the space between the door and the bed and with a deep throaty laugh gathered her tightly into his arms, kissing her again and again.

"You little devil," he cried, exultantly, "you tried to scare me to death, didn't you? But I knew you couldn't mean what you said. I knew you'd come back. If you hadn't I'd have searched and searched . . . There was something brighter in the sun today, sweetheart, a promise that you would take the sting out of that terrible 'never again' of yours. I knew you couldn't stay away, Margot. There are so few nights left, my sweet, and life is so short and stupid!"

The woman in his arms struggled for an instant, breathed a name in his ear. He groaned.

"Don't"—there was anguish in his tone—"don't say her name now. I've told you, dear, all about that. I love her, too. I know I'm lying and cheating, but if I could only make her understand that I can love her and you, too, it wouldn't be either of those things. She's one thing to me, dearest. You are another. Tonight there is nothing——"

Abruptly, with unexpected strength, the woman leaned out of his arms and pulled the little chain of the lamp that stood on the table between the beds. Then she sat upright, her white face clear cut in the lamplight.

In dead silence husband and wife looked at each other for a long time. There was something inexpressibly pitiful about both of them. The man's helplessly confused mind, jerked abruptly from passionate anticipation of a dream into intimate reality, went momentarily blank. He started to speak; quick eager lies sprang to his lips, but they died there. There was absolutely nothing to say. She knew. That was all there was to it.

The woman, pale, disheveled, smoothed her hair mechanically, her wide eyes fixed upon his face, as if she were trying to identify him. There he sat, Cress, incredibly Cress, looking strangely limp and silly. Cress, his clear brown eyes squinting a little without his glasses, his sudden straight nose, his engaging mouth—Cress, her lover, her husband, her children's father. Children. Louise shivered.

Then by some curious association of ideas she saw Sedgwick Manor. A new emotion possessed her. A frightful shame, so intense that she wanted to scream. She saw herself with horrible clarity being happy—absurdly happy. She heard herself telling people how happy she was—telling things about Cress—how wonderful he was—how he loved her. The strange hot feeling grew alarmingly. It was not anger; it was not outraged decency; it was just Sedgwick Manor, her close, compact little suburban world, and she could hear in her ears its wild laughter,—shrieks of laughter, unbearable mirth—— She choked, then her voice came clearly. He started at the unexpected breaking of the silence.

"I want a drink," she said. He leaped up and started toward the bathroom.

"No," she said, watching him, "I want a drink of whiskey. I'm cold."

Without a word he produced a bottle and glass, and reached for the siphon.

"No," she repeated, "I want it straight. I tell you I'm cold . . . That's not enough. I want a long one . . . There, that's better."

She swallowed the drink in three convulsive gulps. He watched her, fascinated, fearful. She leaned against her pillow quietly for an instant, her head slightly bent as if she were listening for something. He waited, the blood pounding in his ears. His mind was tortured with memories. Tender little sentimentalities that had cluttered up the eight years of his married life, and had wrapped him round and round this woman's heart, came back with a rush. He couldn't bear to let go of them—warm things, kind little things. But he knew they were gone. Something tightened in his throat.

"It's all right, Cress," she said unexpectedly, her voice very clear and impersonal. "Light a cigaret—light me one, too—and we'll talk . . . Thank you."

Cress gaped at her. He had never seen Louise smoke. Physically, she was abnormally fastidious. The way she swallowed that big drink too. It made him nervous; there was a sort of vandalism about it . . . He was glad, however, that she was taking things so damned quietly, immensely relieved that she was not going to make a scene. Yet her deadly calm might mean most anything.

"It's only fair," she said presently, "to tell you that I understand all this perfectly. I used to wonder what people were talking about when they said that men—and women, too—married men and married women, I mean—did this sort of thing. Broke faith with each other. I was stupid, Cress. I ought to have known"—she spoke slowly, searching her memory—"that when I married you I was merely concentrating your desire for

women—lots of women—on me, just one woman. And I should have realized that merely marrying you couldn't possibly eliminate all the others. But you see I was brought up wrong. Old-fashioned ideas about marriage, you know, sanctity of the home and all that—rot."

She laughed shortly, and for a moment smoked in silence. She was conscious through the dull glow of the liquor that here was drama, big, poignant, and she was doing an excellent bit of acting. It helped her vanity a little and her vanity hardly realized as yet how bitterly wounded it was. There was a tense pain in her heart, a genuine physical pain, but she ignored it, noting through half-closed lids the spasmodic wince that twisted Cress's face as she spoke. His agony gave her an exulting joy.

"Men don't seem to know that women are really very much the same. Oh, I suppose it's true"—she was lightly casual—"that women love harder and longer. There are children. But underneath it all, the physical thing is very much the same . . . Besides, women do as they please nowadays. Their standards are easier, you know, Cress. Even I have changed. One must, you know, to keep up with the age." She paused and looked at him steadily, an enigmatic smile on her lips. "Well, Cress, use your imagination."

He stared at her, a dull red mounting in his face.

"You have—" he began stupidly.

She laughed.

"I have. What are you going to do about it?"

Louise went back the next day to finish her visit with Eleanor. There was a big party that night and even Eleanor had to admit that Louise was the life of it. Ted Ormond became hopelessly entangled. Placid beauty, he told Eleanor, is one thing, but beauty plus brains—ah, that is something else again. This devil among women drew you with her eyes and her subtle smile and kept you off with her wit. The quintessence, he declared, of the unattainable.

The Barings still live in Sedgwick Manor. They give brilliant little parties—rather unusual outsiders mingled with the old crowd—and Louise Baring has taken on new and absorbing interests that seem to have broadened her a lot. The old crowd finds her a lot more interesting—more like themselves. They are barely able to recall that there was ever a time when she and Cress were a bit silly about each other.

Nix on the Frau

—Continued from page 37

giving me a kind of vague, puzzled look.

I'm just about to say yes, when I remember the hospital. Why not here? Of course. The old hot wave is up to my neck by this time, but I manage to keep my head.

"Hm. Perhaps she's registered under her professional name—" I try to say it without looking too foolish—"Tillie Ann Talbot."

"Oh, yes, Miss Talbot." He gives me a steel-cold look. "She's in 304."

"She's my wife," I cuts back. "But it's too late to disturb her tonight. Not feeling very well. Give me something on the same floor."

There's a painful few minutes while he gives me a look, then skims through his booking sheets and rubs his chin. That guy could make a fortune playing poker, he's got so much expression in his face. I light a cigaret and try to appear perfectly at my ease. Finally he spots an open date:

"Show the gentleman to 328."

I'll say this place is first class, all right. Everything spic-span and new as a bridegroom's promise. Anyway, the bed's so good, and I'm so tired and it's such real relief to be cool at last, that I sleep like a professional. It's nine-thirty before I open an eye. Quick I'm up and into a dressing gown. I'll give my girl a real thrill and drop in on her for a surprise breakfast.

Not stopping to shave, I slide down the hall. At the door of 304 I knock quietly.

"Who's there?" asks a sweet half-sleepy voice.

"Tillie Ann," I stage whispers, "it's me!"

"Just a minute!" comes a little glad cry, a swish swish of something, the patter of slippers, and the lock turns in the door.

"Hank!" We clinch. "You dear, dear boy. This is a surprise! When did you get here? Come in. Sit down!" And a flock of happy squeals like pigs in clover. Glad to see me? Say. Some guys may cover their fraus' arms with service stripes of diamonds and sapphires, or rope their necks with pearls. But no guy with a tiara of ice ever got a hand like the frau gives little Hank Howard that morning.

Was I lonesome? Well she's been so too. Only more so. I'm good for sore eyes.

"Same to you old girl. You sure are an eyeful any time."

"That's because you love me," she chuckles, emphasizing it with a kiss on the forehead. "You keep me young."

"Speaking of which," I suggest, "how about a little support and nourishment to keep the signs of age away. Breakfast for two here. What do you say?"

"Wonderful."

I'm going to the telephone, when there's a knock on the door.

"What is it?" Tillie sings out.

"Miss Talbot?" It's a man's voice, packed with icicles.

"Yes!"

"Open the door please."

I'm all ready to say something, but Tillie beats me to it in a stage whisper:

"Step into the bathroom, please, dear. You're not supposed to be here, you know."

I protest, but she hustles me in, as there's another knock on the door.

Ain't this a nice position to be in? Here I am, Tillie Ann's lawful three year husband, calling on my own wife. And I'm shoved into the bathroom the minute

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some one knocks on the door. Mad? I'm foaming at the mouth and it's not from shaving soap. Then I listen. All I get is something about "a man in your room." That's enough for me. I thought it might be a package. But if it's house detective stuff they're pulling, I'm going to see they don't annoy any wife of mine. No sirree!

So I open the door, just as Tillie Ann says, "I assure you, you are quite mistaken."

"Ah, I thought so," says the gent. It's a ranch bull all right, even to the gray hairs at the temples and the Elk's watch charm.

"Oh Hank!" reproachfully from Tillie.

"What's the big idea?" is what I want to know.

"THE idea," he tells me suavely, "is that you and this young lady will have to give up your rooms."

"Is that so? Well, let me tell you. She's my wife."

"That's not a matter for me to decide, Mr. Howard. I understand you said the same thing to the clerk last night."

"I did. What of it?"

"Nothing. Only we'd like your rooms please."

I'm getting hotter every minute. Tillie wants to stop me, but I won't let her.

"I tell you, you're making a big mistake. Tillie Ann Talbot is just her stage name, and——"

"If there's any mistake, we'll be responsible," is his cool come-back. "Please pack your things, Miss."

Tillie is already busy.

"Oh, all right," I shout. "Soon as we get some breakfast, we'll shake your old morgue, and good riddance!"

"Please, Hank!" injects Tillie. "Don't make any fuss."

"I'm sorry," continues young Hawkshaw, "but you cannot be served here. We require your rooms immediately. Will you go to yours now?"

I'm so mad I could brain him, and I'm about to say something, when Tillie takes charge.

"That's quite all right. There *has* been a mistake, but we understand perfectly. I'll be ready in half an hour, if you gentlemen will excuse me."

My temper cools off in the shower, but I'm too sore inside to laugh—yet. The idea of their being so dumb! Still, I suppose it does look suspicious. This Lew C. Stone guy sure must be some simp. If I ever meet him, I'm going to paste him for a row of obelisks.

An hour later we're being shown into a waiting taxi.

"The Blitz," I tell the driver.

"How you going to register?" comes from Tillie.

"Why, as Mr. and Mrs. Hank Howard, of course."

"Not at the Blitz."

"All right, at the Stratshield then."

"No, not at any hotel."

"What?"

"I register under my own name or not at all."

"Wait a minute!" I stop the taxi at the next corner. "Let's settle this point before we go any further. You expect me to go to the Blitz and have you sign as Tillie Ann Talbot?"

"It's a matter of principle with me," her eyes flash.

"They think so much of your principle at the place we just came from," I sneer, "they land us in the middle of the street."

"That was merely an unfortunate misunderstanding." She tosses her head.

"Give it any label you like." I'm furious now. "It makes a monkey outa me whatever way you look at it."

"Nothing of the sort. And you don't seem to realize," she comes back at me, "that what you are scoffing at means a great deal to me."

"And you don't seem to realize it means even more to me, Tillie Ann. I haven't said much up to now. Because you been sick. But I meant to the first time you pulled it on Billy Weston. You don't know, either, how I felt up at the hospital, with all the nurses giving me the ha-ha."

"You're too foolish for words," she says, "to imagine people give you that much thought. To them it was just an incident."

"And the same thing goes here," I continue. "It's not a matter of any particular place or any special time. Use your own name on the stage. But when you're with me, it's Mrs. Hank Howard, or nothing."

"It will always be Tillie Ann Talbot," she answers coolly, while I boil.

"Everything was fine and dandy till you joined this Lew C. Stone league!" I blurt out.

"Was it? That shows how much you know! I don't happen to be the nagging kind of wife, that's all. I put up with your foolish whims and fancies. But the first time I really ask a little thing—" There's tears in her voice.

"You call it a little thing," I break in, "to marry me and then, all of a sudden, chuck my name? If the name means nothing to you, why did you take it in the first place?"

"I'm sure I don't know," she sniffs. "The way things are turning out, I'd been much better off if I hadn't taken it."

I begin to see red.

"Well, if it ain't good enough for you now, then I ain't good enough for you either. Me and my name, we travel together, or not at all."

She hears me through. Then looks at me quietly.

"That your decision?"

I'm too mad to reason.

"You heard me," I growl.

"Very well then, you travel alone."

I can't believe I hear right. "You mean that?"

"I was never more serious in my life."

I look at her for a minute, sorta dazed. It don't seem possible that it's Tillie Ann speaking. My girl, what I've been crazy about for years. The little blonde kid that's been a playmate and a pal, and that's worked with me and planned so many things. Here she is looking at me with a hard line across her mouth, and telling me I travel alone. I'm all choked up. I'm hot and cold and mad and sore. I can't think of anything but: "Remember, you started this." Then, mechanically, I pick up my bag and step out.

"Where you want to go to?"

"The Stratshield, please," she calls to the driver, not even giving me a look.

So I'm left flat. I hail another car. No, I won't go to the Blitz, either. Tillie's just been there. Why have them even look at me funny-eyed.

"Take me to the Marshall," I tell the driver.

I go up to my rooms. Swell. Right out on the ocean. Had to take a suite at a whale of a price, but it's all they have left. What do I care? I'm reckless. But what a great place this would be to write in. If I was in good humor and only had an idea.

The idea's the thing, say I, when all of a sudden a prize idea for the new show comes over me like a rash. Whoop! I let out a yell, jump to my feet and grab the phone: "A flock of writing paper, mineral water and lots of ice." Then I take out my traveling flask, light a cigaret, and sit down to think it over. Great possibilities for a musical show. I absent-mindedly slips buttons a dollar. Guess he thinks it's Christmas, or something, for he asks three times is there anything else I want.

"There is, but you can't get it."

"You never can tell, sir," says he, "I'm awfully smart."

"Keep thinking that way—until you get married."

"I'm too smart to do that," he grins, closing the door.

But I'm thinking if you're lucky enough to pull a prize in the old splice-up lottery, like I done, go and thank your stars. Single? It's like trying to beat yourself at solitaire.

Take this new hunch of mine, for example. Now, if I could only talk it over with Tillie Ann for a few hours. No. I dassn't do it. Once I give in there'll be no living with her at all. First thing you know, they'll be calling me "Mr. Tillie Talbot." I'll die first. And I pretty near do at that. I sweat ink. Scribble? I write clean on into the night, forgetting everything except that I want to forget about Tillie.

Four A. M. I am fagged. One more little drink, then to bed. Sleep will feel good. I get the drink, but not the sleep. I turn over for the hundredth time. I musta dozed. For I've a dream of dashing down-hill in a wild taxi driven by the fresh bellhop. He's singing a crazy song about "change your name, ain't it a shame. What's in a name." The meter is winking at me and registers four million dollars, as we bump and grind and rush on to the ocean. Tillie Ann's right in the road. I try to yell, but my throat's all dry. Biff! We hit her and she's thrown sky high. I wake with a bump and a burning sense in my head. The sun's pouring in on me.

I get up and take a look at my script. Say, how did I come to write such stuff? I try to pick out the good spots. It's just a bum jumble of words. I'm so mad I tear it to bits. Then I come to a decision. I've got to see Tillie Ann right away. I won't let on how I feel. A purely business pow-wow! So I phone her hotel. "Miss Tillie Ann Talbot," the clerk says, "has checked out."

"Hm," I says to myself, "guess she went back to New York."

So I put in a long-distance call. Ever try one of them things when you're in a real hurry? Do, some time. It's great for the nerves. I use up all that's left in the flask and a dozen smokes. Finally I get New York. But Tillie Ann ain't there.

"Then," says I to myself, "she's switched her hotel, same as I did."

So I grab my hat and start a tour of the boardwalk. Guess a dozen clerks in as many hotels are sure I'm nuts; for I ask for Tillie Ann Talbot like it was a matter of life or death.

It's after ten when, tired out, I'm headed back to my suite. I'm just inside the lobby and going to the desk when I stop short. Then I blink and rub my eyes.

"What's the matter, old dear?" says the sweetest voice in the world. "You look as though you'd seen a ghost."

"I have," I grin, sheepish-like. For, there in all her glory, smiling at me queer-like, is the frau.

"Well?" she murmurs, "aren't you glad to see me? Haven't you anything to say?"

"I SURE am and I sure have," I gulp. "But I can't say it here. Come on upstairs. I got a suite."

In silence we make the quarters.

"Lovely rooms," she ventures.

"Tillie Ann," I stammer, "I've spent the three worst days of my life in these rooms. First of all though, tell me; how are you feeling?"

"I'm all right. Do I look ill?"

"You look wonderful. Only—your leaving the hotel early this morning——"

"Oh, you do know that?"

"Know it? I've had New York on the wire and I've called personally at every hotel I could think of."

"I was quite miserable—for a while—but I'm all right now." There's a funny look in her eyes and she has to clear her throat before she goes on: "You never went near the Blitz, did you?"

"No. Why?"

"I phoned there and all over town. I even wired New York and got a reply that you weren't there."

We look at each other and laughed. Say, ain't a laugh a great thing? Tillie's is the sweetest music ever.

Just then there's a knock on the door and we both stand still. I'm thinking of another knock on another door. Quick I grab Tillie's arm.

"Nix," I whisper. "No bathroom hiding this time."

"Come in!" says Tillie. And in bustles my smart-alec buttons with a grin, three grips and a hat-box. Tillie's! There's a feeling inside of me like old home week. I look at the girl and she looks at me.

"Well, Mohammed," Tillie laughs again and pulls off her hat when the bellboy has gone, "here I am on your hands, bag and baggage!"

"I'll go down and register," I shoot quick.

"I've done that already."

"How?" comes from me like an explosion.

She tries to look solemn, but her face won't stay straight. "Mrs. Hank Howard, darling. Come kiss the vanquished!"

"And Tillie girl," I manage between clinches, "this whole business has given me a great hunch for the new show. It's all about a guy that gets caught in his own wife's room."

"Good! Shall I tell you what to call it?" smiles Tillie Ann.

I kiss her again. "Shoot the big idea, honey."

She gurgles, "Nix On The Frau."

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E Pluribus Unum

—Continued from page 68

disgustedly, "leastways you always do."

"Yes, I always do." Again the cynical laugh that made Joe so uncomfortable. "It's a case of brains against brawn, my man. The educated rat against the alley variety. Well, Joseph, what did you pay for this shining emblem of all things desirable?"

"One hunnard ninetee dolla." He beamed. "I change him."

Joe bent closer over the table. In his open left palm lay the silver dollar. It caught the flickering yellow light of the smoking lamp and flung a challenging ray into his wary eyes. He tautened every muscle in his powerful body.

The chief turned toward his henchman. "Some one seems to have plucked your goose, Nelse. The prearranged fee is to be divided by prearrangement." His mocking laugh filled the shanty.

The thwarted smuggler hurled himself across the little space that separated him from his cargo and with the strength of frenzy brought the gun down with a terrific force upon Joe's outstretched palm. But every ounce of strength in that Herculean body was ready. The big fingers closed about the barrel even as they twisted under the crushing blow. Jerking his knee upward he hoisted the table away from the deformed chi f up against the low swinging lamp, crashing the chimney and throwing the place into blackness. The right hand swung the chair at the shrouded window and with a lunge Joe hurled his body backward toward the ragged opening, but—from the chief's corner a blazing light was flung straight in his eyes.

He was almost blinded by the hunchback's pocket flashlight. He opened his mouth to yell when two perfectly pronounced words chilled him into silence.

"Be still."

Then the terrific blaze was turned out of his eyes toward the corner and Joe made out Nelse Jones' unshaven face, peering from where he had been flung by the impact of the table top. In his hand was a snub-nosed automatic and he glared at Joe with the malice of a cheated cheat.

"I'll have your little bulldog, Nelse. If it should bark it might make us conspicuous."

STILL protecting his eyes the smuggler gave over the pistol.

"Now get up. I won't let your protégé harm you."

Nelse pulled himself back upon the rickety stool. "I'll get you yet, you dirty alien."

"You are mistaken, Nelse. You see I am indebted to Joseph here for sparing my unmanly chest the weight of the table. You probably did not notice that he was careful to swing it away from me. He is to leave here under my protection. *Noblesse oblige*, which means nothing to you. Now, Joseph," the stooped one stood on his short thin legs, "thank you. And on your way, man, and don't forget—*E Pluribus Unum*—if you do not first succeed, try, try again."

Joe was pushed out the door, and he ran for blocks. He did not know that Nelse and his chief would no more have followed him through the streets than they would have risked murdering him on a prominent thoroughfare.

When he halted to get his breath he discovered that he still gripped in one hand his own silver dollar. He muttered his slogan, "In God We Trust," crossed himself, and struck out to find Hamtramck and Isadora.

He trudged in the direction given him by a restaurant keeper who leered knowingly at him. The next person he asked was a truck driver. "Where Hamtramck?"

"Climb aboard. I'm headed for Caniff Street."

Joe grinned his thanks and pulled himself up on the seat beside the driver of the big truck. They bumped over the streets and car tracks. Joe's heart pounded. He was exultant. This was the United States of America, the greatest land for the laboring man, now his home, his country.

The truckman cut in with a raucous shout, "Where yer goin'?"

Joe carefully gave the memorized address on Conant Street.

"Old country?"

"You betcha." Joe shouted back above the noise of the motor.

"How long yer bin acrost?"

Joe hesitated. "Not long."

"Got your papers?"

"I dunno."

"Naturalization papers."

"I dunno."

The truckman turned and stared belligerently. "Say! You smuggled?"

"Who? Me?"

"Shure, you! You lookut to me and let me tell yer: us that paid our head tax don't want no yeller belly crawlers givin' us a black eye with Uncle Sam."

They rode in sullen silence until the driver pulled up his brakes and with a nod dismissed Joe.

"T'anks." Joe slid to the ground, hesitated, then walked in the direction pointed out by the truckman.

So that was how his countrymen felt about the smuggled alien; he was despised in this great land, with the foreign as well as with the native born. Not good, that.

But Isadora——

His steps quickened. Isadora'd fix it. She knew lots of people who came over so. That truck fella had a grouch on. You betcha.

A stiff-flung wafer of a street sign showed Conant Street and Joe began to look for the number. Gray house after gray house, all exactly alike, and the titillating music of phonographs tinkling from every other one of them. Doors opened and closed letting people in and out.

Joe halted before the house from which came the noisiest music of all. He was trying to summon courage to knock when the door opened, letting out a shaft of brilliant light, illuminating the bulky Joseph from head to toe—a grotesque figure in three suits of clothes and a mackinaw. The light blinded him and he raised a hand to his eyes and saw two persons, a man and a girl, watching

him with curiosity from the threshold.

"Say, whadda yer want here?" the man barked.

"I look for Miss Isadora——"

"Joseph! Joseph! Joseph!" shrilled the girl.

Her hands beat at his bundled figure, her fingers clutched his sleeve pulling him farther into the light.

"Oh, when—how—oh—" Then a rush of Slavic questioning that brought the blood to Joe's head and the tears to his eyes.

Isadora dragged him into a room full of people; the phonograph was stopped; they all crowded around. Some one held a glass of scalding liquor to his lips and there was much laughing and talking. His people these. People of the United States.

In all his twenty-five years he had never been so happy. He looked from one to the other of the voluble group with eager, friendly eyes until he came to him who had stood in the door with Isadora.

Joe had never before seen such a man as this one, so thin and pale, hands white, pants full like a woman's skirt, hair sleek and long. This must be Eddie, the Eddie who had taught Isadora to dance American fashion. Joe thought of a worm discovered under a wet plank. The two men faced each other with the hate of jealousy.

"Oh, Joseph," Isadora cried, "this here is Eddie—Eddie Hersch." She stopped. "Say! What's the matter with you two fellas?"

Joe glared, but said nothing.

Eddie stepped toward her, his wide nostrils narrowing, one half of his hard-hammered mouth quirked downward. "Dora, are yer comin' wit' me, or ain't yer?"

She wavered first toward Eddie, then toward Joseph, as if literally swayed by the hand of indecision.

Eddie pushed his claim. "Well, I gotta date, ain't I?"

"Yes, yes, Eddie, but Joseph has come—just come."

"You betcha." Joe laid a bundled arm about the shoulders of his girl. The sweat poured down his cheeks. The heat of the room and the heat of his many garments were steaming him.

The others crowded closer, greedy for this morsel for gossip.

The close-set eyes of Eddie Hersch shifted from one to the other. "'Yes, yes'—'you betcha.'" He mimicked first Isadora, then Joe. "He just come, all right, all right. But how?" he hissed. "Belly crawlin'!"

Joe did not understand Eddie's muttering or Isadora's frightened face. Some one started the phonograph and every one in the room except Joe understood why Isadora slipped into Eddie's thin arms, pressed her cheek against the silken arrow tipping a coat seam, pouted her red lips provocatively and swayed to the phonograph's wailing jazz.

Joe could not know that she was only playing for Eddie's promise not to betray him to the police, and that every atom of her was conscious of his presence. But there was something that he did know; for Joe, watching, now for the first time really saw this new Isadora dancing American fashion, her desirable self pressed against that damp white worm.

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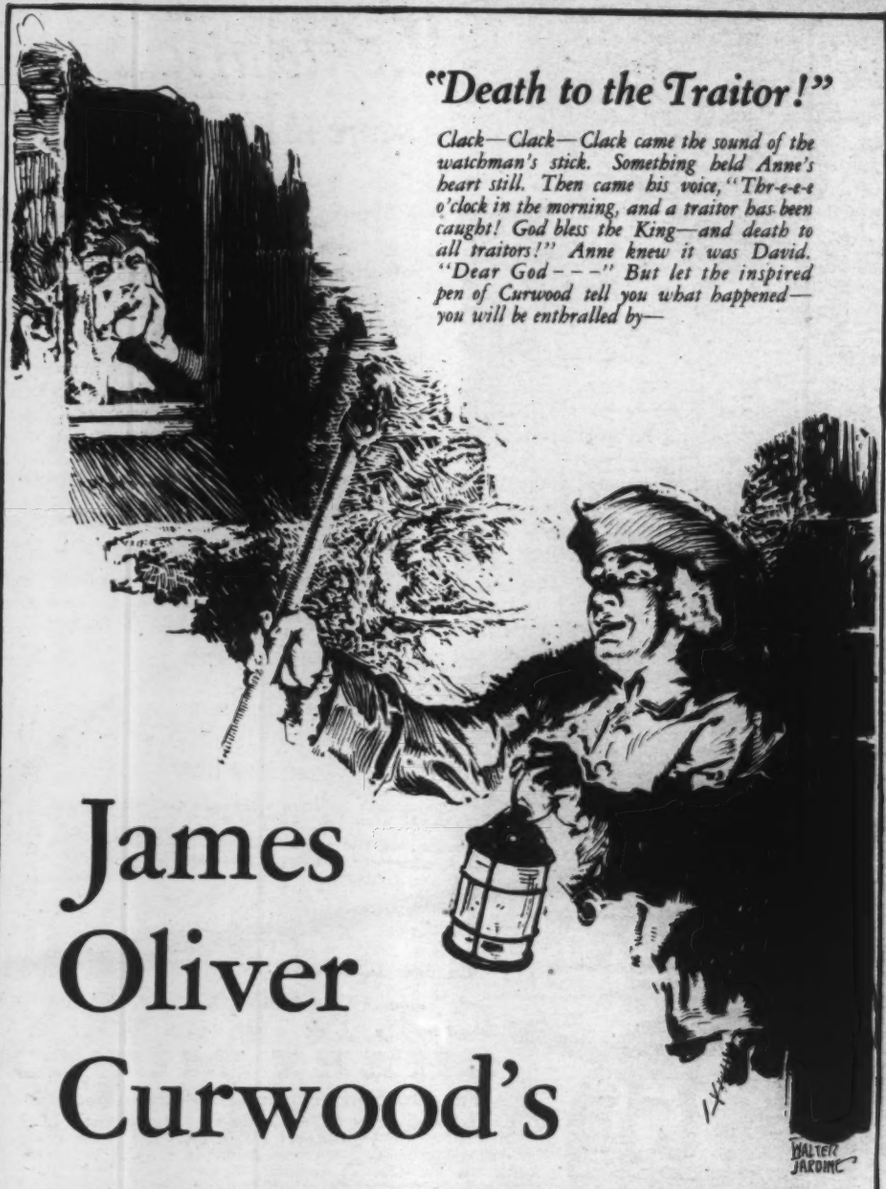

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With a bound he was beside the dancers, his great hands closing on a shoulder of the boy and of the girl, separating them as if they were the halves of a nut.

"Cut that out!" he bellowed.

Eddie spun about like a top, his heavy eyes squinted, his chin shot forward, his lips curled back from his bad teeth. "Take yer big mitt off'n me! I'm American born, you—you—dirty alien!"

"You betcha," roared Joe. If this Eddie was an example of American born Joe was an alien and proud of it.

"Aw, you bohunks make me sick. You sneak in here, crawling on yer fat bellies, and expect us good Americans to kiss yer lyin' mouths."

Joe did not take in all these things, but he got enough to know that Eddie Hersch was berating him. With one wide sweep of his arm he caught the sneering mouth with the flat of his calloused palm and swept him back against the gaudy wall-paper. Bedlam broke loose. Every one in the crowded room began to talk, argue and advise. The phonograph reached the end of the dance record, but no one turned it off—crrk!—crrk!—it rasped through the babble.

Joe stood like a bewildered giant, his throat working with words he did not know. Eddie Hersch wiped flecks of blood from his receding chin with one shaking hand and smoothed his long hair with the other. With swift, angry jerks he slipped his skinny arms into his plaid overcoat, placed a light felt hat at the accredited Prince of Wales, angle, and started toward the door.

"Say, Eddie. Where you goin'?"

"Goin' ter drop by the station house and speak wit' de sergeant."

"Snitch, Eddie? Goin' to be a dirty snitch?"

"There ain't room in this town for him and me."

Joe towered above them, watching, comprehending little, but waiting for a sign from Isadora and he would stamp that soft thing under foot.

But Isadora gave him no sign, and he could not understand the quarreling that followed. It ended with Eddie shrugging his shoulders, snapping his fingers, and slamming out of the house. Isadora stamped her foot and kicked the door with her high-heeled slipper. Joseph thumbed his nose and everybody laughed, he most of all.

Some one brought in home brew and mugs; cups and glasses were filled. Dora's friends jostled each other to drink to Joseph, who refused to drink after that first scalding draft that had nearly choked him; but he beamed upon everybody, most of all upon Isadora who answered his smiles with mischievous grins. She returned his elephantine pats with playful pinches, and his Slavic sallies with American slang. Joe scolded about the tight dress with only one skirt and she flicked that wisp of skirt at him. He strove to awaken Slavic memories and she answered with American quips.

Isadora was funny. You betcha.

At last the room was emptied of garrulous neighbors, fellow boarders, and landlady, and as soon as they were alone Joe pulled off his mackinaw, wrapped it about Isadora, and opened two windows letting in drafts of icy air.

Then he drew her down on the very American plush-covered davenport and she nestled close to his side. His big arms crept about her and he held her close while she gave him kiss for kiss.

He and Isadora in the United States—together—at last. But she pulled away, buttoned the mackinaw close under her chin, and began:

"Who got you in?"

"I dunno."

Joe was unwilling to speak of the hunch-backed chief who had spoken English so strangely, and told him the meaning of *E Pluribus Unum.*

"You do know, too. What was the name of the guy you bargained with?"

"Nelse Jones."

Then in voluble Slavic he gave her the details of the trip across, his successful ruse, and the event in the cabin. She did not interrupt him once, but her eyes grew bigger and brighter with the recounting, and when he finished, she gasped:

"Gee!"

"You betcha!" Joe was proud, boastful, but Isadora looked away from him and her pretty lips thinned.

"Now, you got to beat it—hide somewhere. Eddie's goin' to tip off the cops. You got to hide."

Joe laughed. Isadora was talking foolish. Did she think, after he'd paid a hundred dollars to get into this country, had beaten a smuggler, had slapped that Eddie's face, and held his girl in his arms—did she think that now he was going to *hide?* Not on your life. He reached to take Isadora in his arms, but she frowned and pulled away from him.

"What made you smuggle in? You said you was goin' to wait for the quota?"

"I come—" Joe sprang to his feet, his clear gray eyes darkened with jealousy, his hands doubled into fists. "I come—to git you—away from that Eddie Her—" Then he floundered, unable to remember or pronounce the surname.

"But Joseph," the girl cried, "I'm just kiddin' Eddie. I only——"

A bomb of hate exploded in Joe's brains. "You—you—dance—rotten."

A MAD whirlwind was upon him. Frenzied pounding of fists beat upon his massive chest. "You lie—you lie—I'm not rotten—I'm not——"

Joe's hand caught the two flaying fists and his voice rumbled over the hysterical denials.

"Cut that out! Cut it out! Say, lissen! Me? I not lie. I see you—wit' my eyes. You make love wit' you'se'f when you dance. So, I slep heem. Now he tell by me. Aw right, he tell! You beg I come by smuggle. So, I come. Now you say, 'Go hide!' *Naw!* I not hide. I won't hide. I go back. I done wit' you."

He started toward the door. Then he turned. "I smuggled in." He spat on the floor. "But I won't hide. I find that chief and pay heem to git me back."

"No, don't spend any more money. If you hurry you can mix in with the Canadian night shift crossin' the ferry."

"Where at?"

Isadora began to cry, but Joseph turned his eyes away, opened the door, and repeated, "Where at?"

"Wait," she sobbed. "I get somethin' for you—somethin' you take by you to show you the way back." She left the room.

Joe waited in the doorway, angry and miserable. This was not the United States he had expected to find, the land of opportunity, freedom, progress. This was the United States of the smuggled alien; danger, fighting, prejudice, contempt from all alike, American born and foreign born. He had entered through the wrong door and taken the wrong path, but he would not hide. He was going back to wait his turn to come in under the welcome sign——

BUT ISADORA—the chords in his great throat ached with disappointment. His Isadora. The door opened and she stood on the threshold. On her bobbed curls at a rakish angle sat a green suede hat, about her plump shoulders she wore a dark blue coat with imitation fur on the collar and cuffs, on her feet were galoshes, unbuckled and flapping; her lips were dark crimson and her nose was a chalkish white. American girl all of her, but one thing—in her left hand she clutched a bundle, lumpish, ungainly, tied in the shawl which Joe remembered as the same that had draped her pretty head and shoulders the day she said good-bye at Prague when she and her brother had started on their long journey to the land of promise.

"In God We Trust," murmured Joe, his eyes fastened hungrily on the bundle—symbol of their home land.

Isadora giggled, ending in a choking sob. She flung herself across the room and grabbed the old mackinaw forgotten on the davenport.

"Put it on quick. We gotta make that ferry."

"I dunno."

"You do know. I'm goin' with you, goin' to marry with you in Canada till you come in by the quota."

Joe reached for her bundle, but she held to it.

"No, you not cross by me. You mix with the night gang. I got my papers," and she tossed her head.

Seated in the street car she gave him a United States poke in the ribs. "I marry with you, and we come back by the quota, and no yellow skunk like Eddie Hersch can say you crawled in on yer belly."

They both burst out laughing. Joe's fingers fumbling in his pocket closed on the round silver dollar. He eyed Isadora slantwise and with his tongue in his cheek watched her for a moment, then looking very serious and important, he repeated solemnly:

"E Pluribus Unum."

"What say?"

Joe only smiled.

"What talk is that?"

"United States."

"Get out! Means what?"

Joe labored a moment to remember the stooped one's words, then:

"If you do not make at first, try heem again."

Joseph stretched his great body, smiled into Isadora's worshipping eyes, yawned prodigiously, and uttered his supreme phrase:

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The Gossamer Girl

—Continued from page 61

something, a warning, Ambrose thought. She wanted him to be silent about the other woman. Ambrose, however, refused to be implicated in any dark game she was playing. He said:

"That is so, *m'sieur*. Another lady did leave the train."

"Ah," cried the detective like a man hearing news, and Ambrose saw that this Gundred Kennedy had misled the police about that also. "You saw such a one? Where did she go?"

Ambrose explained how it had been impossible to see because of the bother over his ticket, but he described the gossamer girl for the detective, and the man drank it all in. The fat *gendarme* said quickly at the end:

"*Mam'selle* here declares she saw no such person? Could that be the truth, *m'sieur?*"

Ambrose had guessed the girl had lied, but he was taken aback by it. Yet he could not expose her. He was a man and an Anglo-Saxon. He answered stiffly:

"Why not? Miss Kennedy here left the train half a minute after the other lady."

There was a light in the girl's eyes, and the play of a smile over the corners of her beautiful lips—her satirical lips. Was she laughing at him?

THE police let them go then. They walked back to the hotel together. He wondered what the whole business was about, but the girl seemed to know it inside out.

"They're after a gang of jewel thieves," she told him in that cool and slightly amused voice of hers. "Thieves who make a business of lifting valuable trinkets in Paris and hiding them—and themselves—here. They had news this morning by that detective from Paris, I take it, that one of the most clever and dangerous of the gang had returned here. As we alighted from the train in the small hours the local police naturally thought it must be one of us. The police always think of the obvious, don't they?"

"People are so clever now-a-days," he said coldly, "that they realise that the obvious is generally the thing overlooked, and so they do the obvious thing to escape under its guise of innocence."

She looked at him quickly and laughed outright.

"You're not an amateur detective by any chance?" she cried. "If you are I would not experiment with this gang, they're—I understand they are dangerous."

She was warning him to keep clear of course.

"You seem to know a great deal about them," he said, his lips stiffening.

"Enough to warn you, Mr. Grover," she answered. "Don't play policeman. It is risky. This gang stops at nothing."

He did not attempt to probe her knowledge. He felt that would not be wise. She seemed to him a woman who would stop at nothing—as she had said. He had another reason, too. He was almost certain it had been the gossamer girl in that boat. He recalled the cry that had sounded like a woman's . . . They stopped at nothing, this gang. What if they had got that delicate flower of a girl into their power—the girl this Gundred Kennedy had lied about. And why had she lied?

He said as evenly as his fears allowed: "What about that other woman? How is it the police have not found her?"

She looked at him steadily for a minute—they were on the steps of the hotel—and her eyes were clouded.

"She has vanished, Mr. Grover. Vanished utterly."

They stood facing each other for a tense moment, she striving to read his thoughts, he trying to hide the horror and anger in his heart. Then she said with her mockery more apparent than ever:

"Thank you for lying about that matter, Mr. Grover. It was a hard thing for you, but you did it like a gentleman."

She went into the hotel.

THERE was only one explanation. Ambrose Grover saw the whole ghastly thing plainly.

This girl, Gundred Kennedy, had lied about the gossamer girl for a definite reason. That reason was that she did not want to be connected with a girl she enticed or carried off to that hulk. The girl he had seen in that stealthy boat *had* been the gossamer girl. The cry he had heard had come from that frail and gentle little thing as the gang, these jewel thieves seized her—he prayed it was only that—seized her for the jewels she carried. The gossamer girl was, then, a prisoner on the hulk; again he prayed that it was only that, just a prisoner, not worse.

And this girl, Gundred Kennedy, was a partner in this infamy. No doubt of that. Hadn't she lied to the police about that angel of a gossamer girl? Hadn't she shown an intimate knowledge of the gang? Hadn't she, finally, warned him to keep clear of her and her gang?

There was no doubt about the thing. The gossamer girl was imprisoned on that hulk, at the mercy of this handsome and hard minded creature. In danger. He had to rescue her.

Like most of his race he was slow to warm up, but when he did there was no cooling him until he had done what he had set himself to do. The very simplicity of his nature enabled him to carry out his plans with complete success. He guessed that the police would have him watched, and as he did not want the police in this, he got rid of his shadower by the simple method of buying a ticket for a picture theater that night, entering, standing back in the dark, and then going out a moment after his shadower had entered. Then he worked his way down to the edge of the pool of dead ships, marked where some skiffs were buoyed, and hid himself under a mound of rotting timber.

He remained there until the night life of the little town died down, and he was just going to make for a skiff when he realised that someone else was moving amid the junk. There were clouds over the moon tonight, and he heard rather

than saw the moving figure until there came the sound of a boat being pushed out over the gravel. Then a gleam of moonlight shot through and he saw it was the girl Gundred Kennedy. She was setting out for the headquarters of her gang on the old hulk.

He smiled grimly as she rowed gently off. He gave her half an hour, and then waded out to a skiff, cut the painter and followed her.

The old hulk appeared as deathly and desolate as a crumbling tomb. He might have imagined that nothing but rats existed aboard her, had he not known that somewhere within its shadows was the gossamer girl, held prisoner by these brutes of thieves, of which this other girl was the chief.

The hulk towered above him like the wall of a fort. There seemed no chance of boarding it, but he knew that the thieves did board it. He rowed round it and found he was right. On the side where the deck canted towards the water was an innocent seeming rope, a sound rope in spite of years of decay. More, bobbing at the end of that rope was Gundred Kennedy's boat.

He shinned up the rope. The deck was dead but not too dark. Here more than ever the hulk seemed utterly devoid of life. He crept the length of the deck, hearing nothing, seeing nothing. One hatchway led into the bowels of the yawning dark. The other showed a wash of slimy water at the base of the companion ladder. That certainly led nowhere.

He went down the other, fumbled about cautiously with the torch he had brought, and found nothing. Nothing. There was just an open deck space with a forecastle forward, empty, and solid bulkheads aft. Beneath, just water. He began to wonder if he had come on a fool's errand.

And yet of course he hadn't. This Gundred Kennedy had come aboard and was somewhere. He stood stock still listening—listened until his ears cracked. Then he heard voices. Distinctly voices in conversation—but the direction of them was madness. They came from aft the bulkhead. And the only way down aft the bulkhead led straight into the deep water that filled the hulk.

He felt along the bulkhead. It was solid timber with no door opening aftward. He went on deck and searched again. There was no way down save the companion ladder that led to the slimy water. He was driven to use this ladder in the end. He went down several steps, until his feet touched water. Another step, it was above his ankles, and he was standing on the deck-planks. Standing solid. What had looked like a bottomless pit of water was only a foot deep. He began to see what was behind it. He walked up the deck towards the side canted high out of the water. Of course he was on dry planking in a stride or so. He moved forward round an angle and saw a gleam of light.

He almost laughed at the brilliance of this hiding place. From the deck above it looked as though this hulk was full of water, that nothing could live in it. That water, however, only masked the fact that all the cabins on one side of the vessel were high and dry.

He stole along the gallery towards the light, but stopped before he reached it. He had come upon another light shining through the crack of a door on his right. He bent and looked through the keyhole. He saw a big cabin on the inside of the ship. At a table under the feeble rays of a ship's lantern sat the imprisoned gossamer girl. She sat with her hands clasped on the table before her, staring ahead—poor, desperate, gentle little soul. His heart filled with pity, as his eyes took in her fragile beauty.

He whipped the door open calling softly: *"Mam'selle! Mam'selle!* Do not be afraid. Do not cry out. I have come to save you. It will be easy. Keep calm!"

She sprang up at aonce, hand on her small, soft breast, her great eyes dilated with fear. Her trembling lips cried:

"Who are you? What brings you?"

"Do not fear, *mam'selle,"* he smiled, quietly coming into the cabin. "I am here to rescue you. I saw them carry you off yesterday. I watched the boat. I heard things about these brutes of thieves who have imprisoned you, from the police . . ."

"You are from the police?" she cried, her face wan, beautiful, pitiful.

"No—no, *mam'selle,"* he answered, "I am alone. I feared for you. I saw you in the train. Ah, I see you remember. That made me desire to be—alone—your rescuer. We can go to the police when you are safe."

"M'sieur! M'sieur! You bewilder me," she whispered. "What is it you say? You came alone? Just to rescue me? But if you are alone . . ."

"It is quite safe. Those ruffians are forward talking. The way is clear. I have a boat. Come, *mam'selle,* we must not lose time. You are safe—you can go free."

"Free, *m'sieur!* Free!" she cried looking round wildly. "Show me the way—this is a terrible place. Go first."

Ambrose turned to lead the way. He had reached the door when something slashed with brutal violence onto the back of his head. As he fell into a black pit of oblivion he heard a voice screaming for aid . . . A woman's voice.

HE CAME to himself under a bright light. Five people were near him quarrelling. Opening his smarting eyes he saw he was in a big cabin lit with several swinging lamps. It was part a living saloon, part a bunkhouse. There was a table in the center. It was round this table that the people quarreled. Four of the people were men, unlovely brutes, the fifth was a woman. The gossamer girl!

She was no longer like moonbeams.

Her face was lined and twisted with a rage that made her look like a spiteful tiger-cat. Her shy eyes blazed like black pools of venom, her voice shrilled and tore the air in one steady stream of accusation and vile Apache curses. She was screaming:

"That is what I say, that is what I mean. You do not fool me, you pigs with your stupid would-be innocent airs. I know you. I say it again—which of you has taken the Capelin jewels? They were there, I tell you, when I left you scum to share out. Do I not know it? Did I not take them myself? Where are they? Who is the sneak-thief?"

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A big, vile brute snarled: "We tell you again and again, Delie, that that is what we demand to know ourselves. Those Capelin jewels were here, we all saw and marked them, when you struck that pig of a spy on the head and yelled. We come up the passage to you, that is all, and when we come back they are gone." He scowled like an ape at the girl. "We were busy tying that pig up, Delie. What were you doing while we did it?"

"What was I doing?" she screamed. "What could I do while your great carcasses filled up my doorway. You saw that yourselves. You—Jean, Henri—you saw that?"

"It was so," said two of the men. "Delie could not get past us while we tied the fellow, Raoul."

"His eyes are opened," said the man Jean. "He is back in his senses."

"Ah!" Raoul's cruel eyes swept round to Ambrose. "Awake, hey? Fit to talk . . . We will have a little conversation with this one, yes. Pick him up boys and stand him against the bulkhead. A little conversation will tell us many things."

His voice was purring cruelly, and he was feeling the edge of a knife he had drawn from his belt. Two men advanced on Ambrose, but they did not reach him. From the door of the cabin a voice said: "Don't touch him. Stand back—I'm a good shot."

It was the voice of the girl, Gundred Kennedy. From the corner of his eye Ambrose could see her filling the doorway, tall, strong and as calm as ever. And she held a pistol in her hand. The men backed away and snarled instinctively. The woman Delie let out a snuffle of angry fear: "That Kennedy vixen. She took the Capelin jewels!"

"Quite right, Delie," said Gundred Kennedy. "And tell your friends I'm a girl who means business. I'm not an American for nothing. Little guns like these were my home-town toys . . . Ah! Drop that sonny."

One of the men must have reached for a weapon. The pistol in Gundred's hand snapped like a whip. The man screamed and fell back moaning on a bunk.

"No need to talk now, Delie," said the calm girl. "One demonstration is better than a hatful of speeches. Besides, I'm pressed for time." Her pistol waved toward the man Jean. "You just step up to Mr. Ambrose and cut his bonds. And no tricks. Death is a most final thing when it arrives."

Ambrose stood up, gently rubbing his painful wrists. The magnificent girl continued:

"What have they taken, Mr. Ambrose? Feel through your pockets." Ambrose felt and mentioned his losses. The pistol menaced Raoul. "Cough up, friend," she said, "I'm getting impatient. I want this gentleman's pocket-book and all the rest. If they're not delivered while I count ten this hulk won't be the only dead thing on the harbor mud at the word eleven."

At the word seven Ambrose had all his belongings back. The girl said: "Face the bulkhead, the lot of you; you too, Delie, and put your hands up. Ambrose, pass behind me and go back to the boat. Don't argue—go."

He obeyed for she certainly controlled the situation. As he turned to wade for the ladder, he saw her hand on the door feeling for the outside bolt, with the pistol at the ready. As he reached the upper deck the door slammed and the bolt shot home.

She was beside him on the deck in a flash.

They raced down the rope to their boats, pulled both clear of the hulk and let hers go adrift. Then they rowed swiftly to the dark shore. She sat crouching in the boat when it grounded, and when he put out his hand to help her ashore he peered close and cried in amazement: "Why! *You* crying!"

It was amazing, that. He had thought her cool, capable, hard, not like the tender and dainty gossamer girl . . . And yet it had been the gossamer girl who had turned on him like a tiger and acted like a fiend while this girl—this girl cried. Once again he realized as all men realize that there is no understanding women.

"I'm a fool," she said in a quaking tone.

"You're wonderful," he breathed. "But how a girl who could have acted as you did . . ."

"Oh, that," she said using her handkerchief, "that was not hard. It was that brute Raoul and the way he looked at you when he held that knife . . ."

"Me," he cried amazed. "Gundred, are you crying because—because you felt for me?"

Queer how immensely elated he was to have a girl like that feel that about him.

"You lied like a gentleman—for a woman, Ambrose," she said. "I—I liked you for that. There aren't so many like you these days."

"But—but——"

"I know you thought the worst of me, and yet you lied."

"I don't think the worst of you now, Gundred," he said. "And I was a fool."

She did not answer, but she put out her hand and he helped her ashore. And perhaps she did stumble—certainly for a moment she rested in his arms.

"I'm glad you don't dislike me now," she whispered gently, freeing herself.

"And you, Gundred?"

"I never began—disliking," she smiled.

"My dear—" he began.

But she cried quickly: "Look, boats going to the hulk. The police. We must get back to the hotel or we'll be taken for confederates again."

"I want to be a confederate again—for always, my dear," he laughed. As they hurried away they heard a noise of tumult over the water, shots even. The police had caught Delie and her gang.

"How did you get mixed up in this, Gundred?" he asked as they walked.

"You heard them speak of the Capelin jewels. I came for them," she answered. "Mrs. Capelin is my sister. She is mad over dancing and foolish about Parisian dancing partners. That woman Delie preys on her sort. She has an Argentine decoy-duck, a handsome fellow and a marvelous dancer, who knows how to get round little fools. He got round Florry, my sister. I stopped their game once. I escorted Florry when the Argentine had asked her to meet his sister, Delie, at his flat. That is how the woman knew me. Three days ago, however, Florry was enticed to one of the most questionable of the dancing resorts in Paris and robbed. She came back mad with fear of what her

husband would say—he was out of Paris—when he learned she had lost the family jewels in such a den. He is very stern and very proper, and it meant the end of my butterfly of a sister.

"Well, I went to that flat after Delie. Just as I arrived she drove off in a taxi. I followed, in the one I already had, to the station, and saw her enter the Biarritz train. I bought myself a through ticket and came too. I was watching her all the time."

"If you had a through ticket how is it the railway people did not stop you as they stopped me?"

"It was a tourist ticket. I could break my journey anywhere. I followed Delie down to the quays where there was a boat with three men waiting for her. There was not another boat handy, so I had to walk along the shore after them until I saw they made the hulk."

"I saw you watching the hulk," said Ambrose, and he told his version of the story. At the end he said: "You did not tell the police, I suppose, because you want to keep the affair from your sister's husband. But I'm afraid the police will want to know something since we slipped their watchers . . . We'd better make up a story . . ."

They did make up some sort of story, but there was no need to use it. The police saw them next morning and were full of apologies.

"M'sieur! Mam'selle!" said the Parisian detective who was very pleased with himself. "We regret that we made you the victim of our attentions since we know now you are quite innocent. We have captured the jewel gang we were looking for. Indeed we owe that to you—indirectly. We had men shadowing you both last night, and they lost you, *mam'selle*, in the streets, you *m'sieur*, at a cinema. After that we sent out word to our police to be alert for you. Therefore when one of them saw a boat making for a hulk in the estuary we thought it was you and went after, to find not you but these ruffians who we were looking for."

They all laughed, especially Ambrose who knew that it must have been his boat the *gendarme* saw.

The detective said: "Of course, yes, you were a little to blame for our curiosity, leaving a train as you did . . ."

Ambrose said boldly: "I will tell you the real truth, *m'sieur*. *Mam'selle* left the train, as she told you, because the beauty of this little town called to her heart. I, *m'sieur*, I saw *mam'selle* leave. I am a man, and *mam'selle* is beautiful—you understand? It is easy to tell now, for we continue our journey to Biarritz, to be married."

There was no need to say more. Frenchmen may not understand why a man leaves a train because of lack of ventilation, but they understand a man leaving it because of a woman.

"You certainly lie like a gentleman, Ambrose," smiled Gundred as they walked back to their hotel.

"But that wasn't one," he laughed. "I'd made up my mind to go on to Biarritz and make my word good."

She was silent for a moment, blushing. "Don't you think one ought to be truthful to the police, Gundred?" he asked.

"Of course," she said softly.

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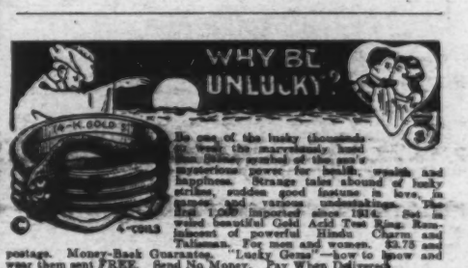

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—continued from page 17

long will it take you to get here, cake?"

"I don't know," he said. "I'm not coming. No, not for tonight. I'm all fagged out."

"Why, what's gotten into you all of a sudden?" she demanded in surprise. "Are you trying to kid me? You know yourself you couldn't keep away from here even if you wanted to."

"That's what you say."

He shut his eyes and pressed his forehead against the wall.

"They're going to have a Charleston contest and everything," Connie was saying. "I entered your name for you. You better see that you get here. The leading lady from 'Lucille' is coming up after the show to award the prizes——"

"Hell she is!" he burst out.

"What's the matter," protested Connie angrily, "are you trying to crack my eardrum?"

"Wait for me," he cried, "I'll be over in a jiffy. Meet you in the foyer—" and hung up.

"Men sure are changeable," sighed Carfare Connie, powdering her nose with a puff the size of a postage stamp.

Meanwhile, in Wally's room a toilette was in full swing. He crowded his number eight feet into number seven dancing shoes, with spats to cap the climax; he soaked his hair with glycerin—oh, there's no use denying Wally tossed a mean toilette once he got going. And as he went out, carelessly banging the door shut after him, the draught brought the movie star's picture fluttering down from the wall.

There was a taxi standing in front of the Rainbow with its engine going, waiting for some one. It was unusual for a taxi to be here at that hour. Most patrons of the place arrived on foot, or if they rode at all it was in trolley cars and the front seats of moving vans. Wally knew who had hired it without being told. He bought his ticket of admission at the box office and went in. At the inner door he was frisked for possible concealed liquor, and brushed by them impatiently. He checked his coat and hat and bought twenty-five cents' worth of blue dance tickets, at a nickel a dance. The lights were all swathed in yellow and orange gauze, and from each corner of the gallery a colored lens was directed against the dancers below. Connie was sitting waiting for him at a tiny table, which held her elbows, an imitation rhinestone purse, a limeade with two straws, and a zigzag of undetached blue tickets. She waved and he went over to her.

"HELLO, cake. How are you, honey?"

"'Lo."

She looked up at him happily. "I saved all my tickets until you got here."

"Thanks," he said. "I bought some."

"You didn't need to, honey. That's what I kep' these for."

His glance wandered all around the place. "Did that girl from the show get here yet?" he wanted to know confidentially.

"Yeah," said Connie. "The manager took her over to introduce her to the leader. She's going to award the prizes."

Wally looked down at his feet.

"You'll make it," nodded Connie, reading his thoughts; "you have it cinched."

"What is it, a singles or a doubles?"

"Singles. That's why I stayed out of it. I didn't want to go against you."

He pressed her hand under the table. "Good kid," he said, which was as close as he ever got to tenderness with her.

Connie felt herself tingle with loyalty. She offered him a straw. "Let's finish this drink together," she said.

They bent down over the glass, their faces close together. Connie's eyelids fluttered with the nearness of it, but she didn't dare look up. They made a slight gurgling sound. "You take the cherry," said Wally generously.

There was a crash of cymbals from the gallery upstairs. Connie and Wally raised their heads. The orchestra leader was holding a megaphone to his mouth. "Ladies and gentlemen," he boomed, "the Charleston contest will now begin. Entries are by name only. Each contestant will be limited to a five minute performance. Miss Mimi Travers of the 'Lucille' company has consented to act in the capacity of judge of this contest. The winner will be awarded a silver loving cup, donated through the courtesy of the United Barber Shops' Association." He held the cup up by one handle and a round of applause followed.

"Isn't it beautiful?" beamed Connie, craning her neck. She put her arm around Wally's shoulder. "It'll be pie for you, honey. They might as well hand it over to you right now."

He smiled—but the smile wasn't meant for her. It was for Mimi, standing beside the orchestra leader. Mimi was beautiful—she was almost too beautiful to live.

"Ladies and gentlemen, Miss Mimi Travers." She and the orchestra leader took a bow apiece. With an almost imperceptible movement Wally freed himself of Connie's encouraging arm. He was clapping his hands vigorously. "Yea, Mimi!" he shouted.

The contest began. Rose and Myrtle and Lily took turns twisting their legs into unbelievable positions, while the band played on.

"Faster and funnier," called the onlookers. "Spread yourself. Do that thing!"

Rose and Myrtle and Lily spread themselves. They did that thing. They did a lot of other things with it. They skipped like devils. Mimi Travers had come out on the floor to get a better look at them. She was sitting gazing over the back of a chair with her chin resting on her arms. There was a gold bracelet around one of her ankles. Rose and Myrtle and Lily were through now. They were panting like grasshoppers. Also they were considerably disheveled.

"Mr. Wallace Walters," shouted the orchestra leader. The music began again.

"Oh boy, Wally," Connie was saying excitedly, "go out there and tear that floor to splinters." She gave him a push

between the shoulders as he got up.

Wally was out there now and the whole hall was spinning around him like a merry-go-round. He could hear them chanting:

I wonder does my baby do that
Charle—stun! Charle—stun!

Wally saw red. He'd show them whether their baby did that Charleston! Mimi was beating time with her hands. Clap-clap, clap-clap. "I never saw any one like *him*," she turned and said to somebody. "Where did he get that from?"

Wally began to skate as though he were on a pond. A tinkle of small sleigh-bells obediently followed from the musicians.

Connie was almost following him around the floor. "Come on, cake. Eat it up, eat it up."

"Give him room!" they cried.

"Get that girl out of the way," ordered Mimi imperiously. "What does she think she is, the tail of his shirt?"

Wally was hopping around like some funny little three-legged animal. He went down gradually like a corkscrew going into the neck of a bottle. Then he straightened up and the music stopped sharply.

Connie was waiting right beside him. She threw both her arms around his neck and kissed him.

"Bless your little soul!" she cried ecstatically.

"Bless both my little soles," he panted.

Mimi Travers was talking very animatedly to the orchestra leader. Every one was watching her curiously. "Hurry up, make up your mind," growled Connie under her breath.

Finally Mimi stood up and took the leader by the arm as though they were going to head a cotillion together. "Miss Travers wishes me to announce," intoned that individual, "that the prize goes to Mr. Wallace Walters as winner of this contest. Will Mr. Walters kindly step this way?"

"Boy, oh bay-bee!" hissed Connie, and she pinched him on the arm. "Do you get that?"

There was an explosion of handclapping. Wally made his way across the floor from group to group, showered with complimentary remarks. Rose and Myrtle and Lily came over to congratulate him—not that they were any the less envious.

"I liked it!" said Rose.

"I loved it!" said Myrtle.

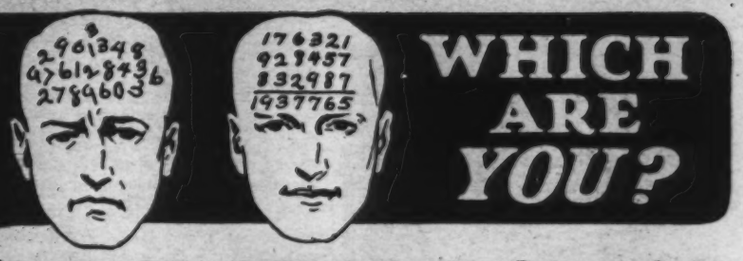
"I adored it!" said Lily.

It was a cake eater's triumph. But Wally who had had many such moments in the course of his career was thinking of Mimi and her castle of dreams. They were standing face to face now. He could see a golden flame quivering in the depths of her heliotrope eyes. She handed him the ice-cold silver cup, and for a moment their warm fingertips touched over its frosty surface.

"Good luck," she said. "You did beautifully."

"Thank you," he answered. "Glad you liked it." He bowed from the hips.

"Hold it up so every one can see it," she said, taking in the entire assemblage at a glance.



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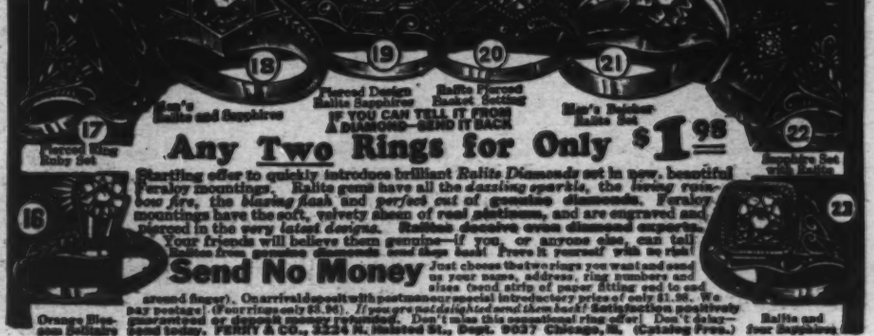

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When it was all over he found himself seated with Mimi at one of the little tables, somehow. And on the table there was an empty glass with two broken straws in it, and some one's rhinestone purse, and a string of blue tickets. Mimi extracted a perfumed cigaret from a small tortoise-shell case and moistened it with her lips. Now almost any one at all could have told Mimi that smoking was against the rule, but it so happened that the unpleasant task fell upon Wally.

"I don't think they let you do that here," he mentioned, as casually as he was able.

Mimi didn't like being told what not to do. "Let you do what—smoke?" she demanded coldly.

He nodded dolefully and made an unpleasant face.

"Oh, yes they do!" she assured him. "They do *me*, at any rate."

He looked rather doubtful and shrugged his shoulders, having had more than one fair companion separated from her nicotine just when she was beginning to enjoy it. "Well," he said, "if you think so, go ahead——"

"I don't think so, I know so," remarked the fiery Mimi. "I'll tell you what, call the proprietor and we'll see."

He tried to grin his way out of it, but this time Mimi was out for blood—that and publicity. "Very well," she said, "then I will!" She stood up and beckoned. "Call Mr. Nathan," she told one of the hostesses.

"Good evening," said Mr. Nathan a moment later; "anything I can do for you?"

"Yes," said Mimi in a clear voice, "I'd like to smoke this cigaret. Have you a light by any chance?" She stared at him defiantly.

Mr. Nathan saw a neat little sign tacked against a post. It read, "Absolutely No Smoking." But "Certainly, certainly," said Mr. Nathan, and dug a little gold lighter out of his pocket. When he tried to light it, though, it shed sparks all over the place.

"Be careful of my dress," cautioned Mimi sharply. Wally, sensing his opportunity, whipped out an everyday case of matches and accomplished the thing in no time at all.

"THANKS," she said, with a sullen look at the proprietor.

"I don't know what's the matter with it," he apologized; "it never stalled like this before."

"No," she agreed cynically, "never."

"Something must be wrong with the tinder," he mumbled to himself as he moved off with his neck bent over it. Wally and Mimi looked at one another and smiled pityingly.

"Isn't he the wet one!" said Wally.

"He's dripping," she agreed.

At this juncture Connie appeared before them with a decided pout on her face.

"I'm ready to go now, cake," she announced, pulling the rhinestone bag from underneath Mimi's nose.

"Well," he said ungraciously, "and what am I supposed to do—break out in a rash?" And Mimi, guessing that the dance tickets were also Connie's property, pushed them angrily off the table with her elbow. They fell to the floor.

"Say, look out what you're doing," snapped Connie, bending over to pick them up.

"I beg your pardon?" said Mimi haughtily.

"You certainly should," Connie told her. She turned to Wally. "Well, make up your mind," she advised him.

"What's all the rush about?" he remarked. "What do you think you are, my time-table? Wise up to yourself."

"All right, cake," she said easily, almost tenderly. "You'll get over it in time."

She turned her back on the two of them. At the door Mimi saw her crumple the tickets in her fist and throw them away from her. But Wally only had eyes for his Mimi. She was the same and yet she was not the same. The clown make-up was gone. She was neat and restful to the eyes. She had lavender silk stockings, she had a gold ring around her ankle, she had a bang slicked down to the bridge of her nose. But he couldn't forget how she had looked with the little terrier clasped in her arms. He couldn't forget that she had stood there on the stage, and every one had laughed at her while her heart was slowly breaking. He kept telling himself that her castle of dreams had come tumbling down just as his had, over and over again. Therefore they were brother and sister under the skin.

"Don't take it so hard," laughed Mimi, thinking he was worried about Connie. "She'll come back; they all do." She stood up, and she was very tall and slim. "Afraid I'll have to go now."

"Can I see you to the door?" he asked.

"Only to the door?" she said, and her eyelashes swept him good-naturedly up and down.

"I meant to your door."

And as they went out he could hear the band playing softly and sweetly:

> It must be love, it must be love,
> That makes me feel this way.

The following evening the fun-loving Mimi Travers, of New York and Philly but still not of points west, was the center of interest of a very lively group of friends who had gathered in her dressing-room before the beginning of the show.

"He thinks," she was telling them, "I'm really the way I'm supposed to be when I sing that song. Sort of dumb and weepy, know what I mean?"

"He must be goofy," they chorused. "What a sap. What a bone."

"He is," Mimi assured them. "Probably he likes them that way. So when I found *that* out I started right in to emote. Last night when we were coming out of the dance hall a stray cat came along and began rubbing itself against me, so I broke down and cried for his benefit——"

Screams of laughter drowned her voice. The idea of Mimi crying about anything seemed to strike them as being extremely funny.

"You should have heard me," she protested. "All I kept repeating was 'What's the use, what's the use, 's a cruel world,' and he dried my eyes and called me his Cinderella. How's that for a riot?"

"Horses!" they gasped hysterically, burying their faces on one another's shoulders. "Oh, you Red Riding Hood! Little Eva!"

There was a warning knock on the door. "Curtain goes up in five more minutes." Mimi quickly wheeled around and began rouging her cheeks with a rabbit's paw. But she was still smiling at the huge joke.

AT THE end of the one week stand Wally was walking on air and living up in the clouds. But Mimi was all packed and ready to leave with the rest of the company. He was sitting out front again the night of the farewell performance—he had seen the show every night that week—and as the house lights went on he edged his way out through a side door and around to the stage entrance. Backstage, everything was in an uproar: sets being taken down and moved about, people getting in each other's way, stage-hands in overalls rubbing shoulders with girls in gorgeous evening gowns. He found Mimi's door and knocked.

"Hello?" she called out. "What do you want?"

"It's me, Mimi."

There was a slight hesitation in her voice as she answered: "I'm busy right now. Can you wait?"

He noticed the drop in her voice. He opened the door and went ahead in.

She was in a tailored traveling suit with a red patent leather belt which made her look about fifteen. Her baggage was piled in a heap in the center of the room, and she was sweeping things from the dressing-table into the last open suitcase.

"Didn't you hear me tell you I was busy," she said angrily. "What's the grand idea? What do you take this place for, a corner drug store?"

"I've got to talk to you," he said.

"Haven't got time to talk."

"I thought you were coming up to the Rainbow with me. It's Saturday night."

"I wouldn't care of it was Christmas Eve. I've got to make that train." She saw the look on his face and it softened her for a moment. "What's the matter with you, cakie? You knew this was a one week stand all along. We're due to open Monday night——"

And now the castle of dreams really came tumbling down, with a terrible crash that no one could hear but himself. He stood there dazed while a couple of stage-hands came in and carried her baggage outside for her.

"Get a taxi if you want to take me to the train," she said shortly. Her one moment of sentiment was over and gone.

They got into the taxi and drove to the railroad station. He looked out of one window and she looked out of the other. Neither of them spoke. When she was comfortably installed in the pullman she took off her hat and straightened her hair, without paying any attention to him.

"Stay over just one more day——" he pleaded.

"My reservation's paid for."

"I haven't told you, but can't you guess why—why I hate to see you go?" he faltered.

"Sure I can guess," she said confidently. "You're keen on me, is that it?"

"That doesn't begin to describe it. All my life I . . . waited . . wanted . . dreamed . . about some one . . like you are . . Oh, if you'd only let yourself be the way you seemed to me the first night I saw you."

"That's sweet and pretty," she told him, "but what good does it do to think about things like that? Castles in the air never did anybody any good—not so you could notice it." She patted his hand. "There goes the whistle, sugar. The best thing for you to do is go back and dance it off."

Outside on the platform the conductor was swinging a green lantern back and forth. "All aboard!" he wailed dolefully. "All aboard!"

"Kiss me good-bye," exclaimed Mimi, "and forget all about me."

Their lips met for the first and the last time. The cars started to move. "I'll go with you!" he cried, swept by a wild, momentary impulse.

"What! And me lose my job!" answered the prevaricating Mimi. "I should say not. Jump or you'll never make it!"

He ran to the lower end of the car and swung clear of the steps. The sound of his voice came trailing back to her: "Bye, Mimi." She pressed her face against the window-pane but it was too dark outside to make out anything. She gave a little sigh . . .

He picked himself up and watched the red tail-light on the rear car grow smaller and smaller until finally it disappeared altogether. Mimi was gone and he would never see her again. He dusted himself off and went back to his room.

But when he opened the door to the "budwa" he found Connie sitting there reading a magazine.

"How did you get in here?" he asked listlessly.

She looked up. "Did you see your friend off?" she wanted to know innocently.

"Yes," he said, "she's gone away. Let her go."

"I been waiting for you to come back," said Connie. "There's going to be a big masquerade at the Rainbow next Sa'ddy night. They're going to give prizes for the best costume. How about us going?"

HE didn't answer. For a long time he stood looking down at her, as if there were something about her he'd never realized before.

"Cake," she said, "are you angry at me?"

"No," he said. "Something's just come over me. I didn't see how I was going to stand it . . . I thought it was going to be lonely . . . I thought it would kill me."

"Sure, honey," she said gently. "I know how those things are. I have it myself—"

Suddenly he sank down alongside her and buried his head in her arms. "But it was you all the time, Connie. It was you all the time."

She caressed his hair with the tips of her fingers.

"Cake," she murmured.

"Connie," he said softly. "Dreams do come true . . . sometimes."

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No Brains

—Continued from page 27

jaunt. Loop is notoriously famous for flying without gasoline; wonder is that he will ride in the same plane with himself. For, as they go, Loop Murry is not so slow on the mental draw. He knows that you can't hope to beat this flying game. That it will more than catch up with you. That it will mow you down. That its patron saint is the old boy with the long curved hay-cutter. If we bought flowers for all our ex-flying friends, we'd never eat.

Loop, with two other lives to account for, of course had cause to look long-faced. But everything came out jake. We made and passed the shore-line. Then wished and hoped a little more, and glided the last mile or so to safe landings at Clover Field. Before he had taxied to a hangar, Loop's old motor gasped a few asthmatic wheezes and died; the gasoline was gone. I must have been loaded with luck that day. I still had nearly a gallon left.

Well, all I can say is that I'm getting this gray hair honestly; and that Loop Murry, in no small manner, is contributing generously to my nightly quota of nightmares. I always seem to wake up just before the crash, and expect to find Loop sitting there saying, "Sorry, Mace, awful sorry, but I didn't know the gasoline was so low." Every nightmare in my stable of dread belongs to Loop.

So two or three weeks, plus nights of troubled dreams, passed before I met anybody who had been connected with the doings. I wouldn't answer a telephone call on a bet. I decided that if any one wanted to see me, he'd do the hunting. But Loop Murry is a boulevardier an is never long gone from Hollywood's gay main street. My erring steps wander that way too.

When I met him coming out of the Christy, Loop was with an ultra-dizzy blonde. My brave friend excused himself for a moment and stopped to talk; the girl, turned loose, fell to window-shopping. They'll do that every time.

"It's a long time I no see you, Loop."

"Yes," he smiled. "Old R. S. was pretty well burned up over our little stunt. I had to make myself hard to find for a few weeks. It's all O.K. now though. He and Hope sailed for the Orient yesterday."

"Who's the new find?" I asked. The window-shopper had bought everything she could wish for and was growing impatient. They'll do that every time, too.

"That," said Loop, turning with a look of proud possession, "is Pola White, my new student."

Miss Pola White, at that time, was beginning to go big in the studios. Her art was in great demand. Loop, I thought, surely was grabbing them choice. For few there were in all Hollywood who would not have deemed themselves lucky were they allowed to spend an hour at dominoes with Miss Pola.

"And she, Loop—does she get the whole bag of tricks, wing-walking, plane-changing, parachute-jumping, and so forth?"

"Mace," he said, "if she does, she can handle it—cause she's plenty dumb!"

The Girl Who Would Go to the Devil

—Continued from page 51

world in shadows. The conductor, pausing for tickets, looked searchingly at the couple. Then Ed noticed that Edith's eyes were wet.

"Why, what's the trouble?" he asked quickly.

"Trouble! Haven't I enough to cry about, if I want to?"

"Of course you have."

Ed felt an impulse to take her hand and pat it. She seemed so—well, fragile; and the girl's spirit was something to sympathize with and admire.

A waiter came through bawling, "Second call to dinner!" Ed suggested that they eat, and without a word she accompanied him to the diner. There they sat in silence at one of the tables for two. Ed gave up his attempts at conversation when she responded only in monosyllables.

Back once more in the chair car, there was a lively dispute over money. The girl insisted that she should pay for her dinner. Ed wouldn't hear of such a thing. It wasn't his money, anyway; the *Bulletin* paid the bills. If the paper had done her such immeasurable harm, shouldn't it be made to give something in return?

And so it was, arguing back and forth, that Ed found she was going to Chicago with less than ten dollars in her purse. The discovery stunned him. Ten dollars! Going to the devil, indeed!

"Listen," Ed said, "let's be frank about this. Have you ever been to Chicago?"

"Once. We were there two days . . . I liked it."

"Know anybody there: friends or relatives?"

"Well, yes. Molly Wagner's in some insurance office. I guess I can find her all right."

"Oh, no doubt!" Ed scoffed. "Well, have you anything in mind? Any kind of a job?"

She returned his gaze frankly.

"No, I haven't. I guess you're forgetting, Mr. Edward Loftus, what I told you."

"Which?"

"About me going to the devil."

"But——"

"It oughtn't to be hard to go there," she went on calmly. "I'm not so *very* ugly, am I?"

"Lord, no! That's the trouble. You're too good-looking."

"Then I oughtn't to have any trouble

getting along! I'd—it'll be much easier than staying on in Morganville or Windsor, after what you and those other reporters have done to earn your precious livings!"

Ed felt cold all over. No hysterical words, these; she was so calmly matter-of-fact about it! He thought of her father. Perhaps . . . perhaps there was a moral taint in her blood.

"Listen here, Edith Uplake," he said slowly, "I'm wondering if you know what you're talking about. That is, do you really *want* to go to the bad; or are you just trying to—well, to get even with the world for this tragedy it's handed you? Like the little boy, a few weeks ago, who was spanked by his mother and went out and drowned himself just so she'd be sorry! Is that the way you feel?"

"No, it's not."

"Well, what then?"

"I told you once. I'd rather do anything than stay home with mama and the pity and the smiles and the gossip that'll never end. I despise them. And that's not all. I'm not afraid of—" she peered into the night, as though she half expected to see the monster gleaming afar across the darkened prairie—"afraid of Chicago. No, I'm not! It may be terrible, as everybody says, but anyway it's *alive*. Always—always doing something! Oh, that's what I want: to be part of it."

"You're right—it's alive," he said softly. "It's a happy city, and it's unhappy, too. Listen . . . I've seen some of these girls that—that went to the devil. In police courts, you know, and detention homes and the like. They're not happy, Edith. They're just kind of dead inside. They're—well, disillusioned. You can see it in their faces."

The light died out of her eyes. Up ahead the locomotive whistle was wailing for a crossing. Then a warning bell sounded and there was a glimpse of two bright lamps gleaming from a flivver at the track side. This time he followed his impulse and took her hand.

"Better change your mind," he whispered. "You're just unnerved—temporarily unnerved . . . Come on! I'll help you find a job."

For a long moment she was silent, while their train bored steadily through the night towards the great gray city beside the inland sea. A wind had come up from the lake, sweeping over the prairies and forcing down the thermometer till the air felt actually cool.

"Well, I guess you know better," Edith finally spoke. "It's your town, and—I'm—I *am* afraid."

"Oh, but there's nothing to be scared of."

"It's so big! And I won't have a friend there, except Molly. And I don't know her very well; don't even know where she lives."

"Only Molly!" He hesitated for a moment. "How about me, Edith? Couldn't I be a friend?"

She said nothing, but her fingers closed on his and he saw that she was crying. Poor little kid, he thought; what she really needs is a mother who understands.

ED felt rather pleased with himself. He was a Good Samaritan. He had deflected a nice little girl from the downward path. He had found her a decent boarding-house and induced a prosperous friend to give her employment.

Nor was that the total of Ed's self-esteem. It would have been so easy to take advantage of Edith in her hour of desperation. And the girl was so attractive! The thought had come to him once on the train, but he had forthwith put it aside as something cheap and cowardly.

"The poor kid was so damned helpless!" Ed muttered as he entered the elevator. "Still," he thought, with a feeling of conscious superiority, "I bet Jim Bowers or 'Prof' Carrylin wouldn't have passed up a chance like that."

As Ed stepped into the local room, he met the city editor returning from the water-cooler. The boss clapped him on the shoulder.

"You just missed going back to Morganville," he grinned. "I intended to send you, but I've changed my mind."

"What's up now?" Ed asked.

"Well, I decided you could handle it by 'phone just about as well. Your old Uplake story's still showing signs of life. It seems his young daughter, this cute looking Edith girl, has run away with some handsome city slicker!"

"Run—! Where in God's world did you get that?"

Prof Carrylin, who had been standing by, began to laugh.

"Go easy, Boss!" he cautioned, jerking a thumb toward Ed's flushed face. "The young man's very likely a disappointed suitor. The city slicker outslicked!"

"Oh, go to hell!" growled Ed, trying to look as if he enjoyed this banter. "What's the dope, Boss?"

"Why, I got a wire from our man down there—Probst, or whatever his name is. All right, is he?"

"Sure. He's correspondent for all the papers, but he's awfully strong for the *Bulletin* and your little friend, Edward. We got along swell."

"Well, you'd better give him a ring. He says the town's all upsot again because this Edith disappeared. It seems that somebody saw her sneak aboard the train. They made inquiries and learned that a stranger had bought two tickets for Chicago, although he got on the train alone . . . No, doesn't give his name. Ask Probst, or whatever he calls himself, to get busy and find out. Also tell him to have Mrs. Uplake swear out a warrant for his arrest on a charge of abduction or something like that. Stir 'em up, Eddie; we'll have an eight-column line yet!"

"Righto!" gasped Ed, walking quickly away.

He entered a 'phone booth, shut the door, and sat there staring stupidly at the pencil-scribbled wall. Lucky he'd given John Probst so many good cigars. Double luck; most of the other Chicago reporters had been inclined to highbrow that humble country scribe.

At last the operator signaled him, Probst's voice followed.

". . . Held out as long as I dared," he was saying. "The whole town knows, and the Chicago papers were bound to find out, anyway . . . No, only five or six of us know who she left with. The sheriff

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kind of got it hushed up, account of liking you; but you never can tell in a town like this . . . Say, that was a fool thing to do. What you go and do it for?"

"But I haven't done anything, John." Ed felt his cheeks blazing like an electric radiator. "Tell the sheriff and those other fellows, will you? All I did was get her the ticket. She wanted to leave town and was scared to get it; don't you see? I just got the ticket and saw she was started right. Listen, John; this isn't an elopement or anything like that."

"WELL, she's not a minor." Ed could almost feel Probst's incredulity surging over the wire. Then, "What am I going to do about the other papers?"

"Oh! . . . Listen, just let it go as a mystery. Make that strong, as if there's no chance of solving it from Morganville. Will you, John? Make it look as if all the sleuthing will have to be done up here—see? It'll keep the papers from sending reporters down."

"All right. I'll do the best I can by you. But I wish you hadn't done it!"

Ed's mind was composed when he finally sauntered out and approached the city editor. No name, he announced; Edith's companion was unknown in Morganville, but Probst had his description. Might not be a bad idea to try the detective bureau—huh? The city editor nodded.

So Ed went out and sat on a bench in Grant Park. He had long appreciated the power of the press, but he'd naturally regarded himself, its servant, as immune from any harm. Yet see how neatly it had trapped him! If he told the truth to the city editor, the latter would demand to know why nothing had been written before about Edith fleeing from Morganville to Chicago—not an insignificant follow-story, considering the wide-spread notoriety of the Pastor Uplake case. Why, Ed had been guilty of out-and-out treason to his paper.

On the other hand, consider what his silence was about to cost. Lurid stories in all the papers tomorrow, each following the obvious "like father, like daughter" motif. Edith's photograph on every front page. Her recognition by fellow employees, despite the fact that she had changed her name to Edith Martin. His own eventual exposure as the city slicker. General disbelief in his protestations of innocence. Disgrace and discharge.

Ed glared at the smoky sky-scrapers of the Loop. He shuddered, just as Edith had shuddered when she looked out at the darkness and saw this lurking city. The girl's words came to him: "It's so big! And I won't have a friend there, except Molly." Molly! His mind leaped eagerly at the name. Molly! Here was an idea—a solution of his troubles. Molly, of course! Why, it was easy!

Ed hurried to a telegraph office and wrote this message to Mrs. Uplake:

DON'T WORRY MOTHER. AM STAYING WITH MOLLY WAGNER. HAVE GOOD JOB IN PUBLISHING OFFICE. WILL WRITE. EDITH.

"That's simple!" he grinned as he walked lightly up the street, chattering to himself in the midst of the traffic. "Now I'll call Probst and tell him to get in touch with Mrs. Uplake. Ask if she's heard from her daughter. She'll tell him, 'Sure! Edith's staying with Molly.' He'll wire all the papers. Story blows up. Nothing to it!"

This time he made the call from a hotel. It was better, he reflected, that he hadn't told the boss about Edith. Then all the office would have known and laughed; and Jim Bowers—coarse roughneck—would have doubtless passed some crude remarks which could only end in bad blood and battle.

Much better this way! Now all Ed had to do was keep away from the office till five o'clock or six. Then he would stroll in and the boss would hand him Probst's message. "Too bad!" he would say, or words to that effect. "Another good story gone wrong! Well, write a stickful saying she's forsaken Morganville for the big town, and we'll let it go at that." Yes, indeed; this was the better way.

Ed decided to kill time by walking over to the printing plant where Edith worked. He would meet her at five and tell her what he had done. Probst had agreed to get Molly's Chicago address and send it by telegraph; so tomorrow Edith would have to pay her a diplomatic visit. Oh, it was all very complicated, but Ed began to find the intrigue rather fascinating.

For half an hour he idled outside the plant, then there was a clangor of electric gongs, and almost immediately people began to pour from the building and rush toward the street-car tracks. Ed stood on the sidewalk beside the entrance, scanning the faces as they came through the door. Edith was one of the leisurely leavers. She came out holding her hat in both her hands, and Ed noticed a white rose stuck coquettishly on her shoulder. A blond young man was beside her—a rather dapper young man, with a taste for the mode and teeth which gleamed pleasantly when he smiled. He was smiling now, and so was Edith.

Instinctively Ed drew back while he watched them approach. Something seemed to clutch at him inside. So engrossed was Edith that she did not see him, although she passed close enough for him to reach out, if he had cared to, and touch her.

"Oh, it's a swell place," he heard the man say. "You'll go crazy about it."

"That's just lovely. I'd rather dance than——"

The rest was lost to Ed. He saw the fellow take her arm and guide Edith to a dusty flivver standing at the curb. He caught one more glimpse of her smile, of the white rose.

On his way back to the office Ed forced himself to examine his feelings logically.

"Jealous—that's it!" he announced to a passing ice wagon. "But, why——Good Lord, I'm not falling in love!"

The notion made him angry, particularly as he suspected it was the truth. He arrived at the office in a bad humor, obsessed by a vision of Edith sitting beside a blond young man whose teeth gleamed pleasantly when he smiled.

Ed looked expectantly toward the city editor as he entered the local room. The latter was busy. A copy boy hustled past, spied Ed, and called out something about a long distance message. Morganville had been trying to get him. Ring Probst at once. Something important.

So it was that Ed heard an injured voice recite this tale:

"Now you've gone and done it! The whole town's aroused, and just half an hour ago Mrs. Uplake swore out a warrant for your arrest . . . Yes. What you want to go and send that fool telegram for? Molly Wagner came in on No. 17 this afternoon—here to spend her vacation. She ain't seen a bit of Edith since last Christmas . . ."

ED's mind suddenly cleared as he sat before his typewriter. There was only one way left, and he felt surprised it had not occurred to him before. Now that he finally saw it, he went about its execution in a strangely calm, cool manner. That first paragraph seemed almost to pour from the tips of his fingers.

> The fatal love affair of Mrs. Martha Jebwith and the Reverend Stephen B. Uplake, whose suicide and murder near Morganville provided a nation-wide sensation, has led to a strange sequel involving the dead clergyman's youngest daughter and a Chicago newspaperman. This became known late yesterday when the girl's mother swore out a warrant for the arrest of Edward Loftus, who was a member of the BULLETIN staff until his discharge last night.

He wrote rapidly, telling the story of Edith's flight to Chicago, omitting nothing except her original intention of "going to the devil." He meant to turn it in at the city desk and then wait for the inevitable "conference" to follow.

The boss was talking on the telephone. Glancing over as he folded the copy paper, Ed saw him hang up the receiver and speak to an assistant. The latter rushed towards the photographers' room. The city editor looked around, saw Ed sitting idle, and beckoned him.

"Got anything?" he asked.

"Only the Uplake story. Just finished it."

"Then taxi out to the Town Hall station and give Stanway a hand. Take a photog." He glanced at the clock. "You'll have to hurry."

Ed handed him the story and hustled out in the wake of the camera man. He did not ask what had happened in the Town Hall precinct. He didn't care. Probably a murder, he thought, and vaguely hoped it would give him a chance to risk his life or something. He felt in a desperate mood.

As the taxicab sped north he wondered what was happening in the office. The city editor had undoubtedly read his story by this time. He was probably showing it to the Big Boss, and the latter was reading with astonishment the confession of his young reporter. Very likely swearing in that gruff, quiet way he had; not that Ed had done anything wrong, but because he had placed the paper in a bad light with some of its subscribers.

The cab turned west and stopped abruptly outside the Town Hall station. Five patrols were backed against the curb.

"Gosh, look at the mob!" he remarked to the photographer as they rushed up the steps.

The place was filled with policemen, well-dressed women, indignant men. Many of them were in evening clothes. Two or three had been drinking too much. Several of the women were sobbing.

Pushing through the crowd, Ed found Stanway, *Bulletin* police reporter, pencil in hand, beside the desk sergeant. He grinned exultantly.

"Some story!" he whispered, gloating just as Ed had gloated over the love letters of Uplake and the widow. "Society women! Gold Coasters, every one of 'em! Peacock Club. Some raid! . . . Hey, Serg, what was that last name, Smith or Brown? . . . *Jones!* Gee, can't they think up great names!"

"What's got to be done now?" Ed asked.

"Help the photog get his pictures. We'll have the society ed identify them."

Ed laughed. Every one who wears an evening gown and more than two diamonds is a "society woman" in the eyes of a police reporter.

But there must be pictures, anyway, and he helped the photographer blow several flash-lights from the heights of the lieutenant's roll-top desk. Then, carrying the pan and powder, he shouldered a way back to the squad room, where the overflow was being herded. It was there that he came upon Edith and her dapper young man.

"Oh!" she gasped, her eyes large and very scared. The color rushed into her cheeks. "Where—how—" she stammered, almost inarticulate with shame and fear.

"Oh, I'm just earning my living," Ed said ironically.

HE GLANCED at Edith's companion and started to laugh. The fellow's lips were actually blue with fright.

"Cheer up!" chirruped Ed. "They can't give you more than life . . . Come on, Edith," he added; "I've got a lot to say to you."

It was easy to get her released: just a word from Stanway, who had been the Homer of North Side cops for something close to a decade. The lieutenant nodded his head, grinned, winked at Stanway—and the two left the station unmolested.

Ed led her to a taxicab. As he banged the door shut she began to cry, softly, painfully. He took her hand.

"Oh, Ed, I'm so ashamed!"

"Nothing to be ashamed of," he assured her. "Those booze raids don't mean anything, except for the women that aren't out with their husbands . . . Besides, *you're* free."

"Yes, but what do you think of me?"

Ed laughed mirthlessly.

"You'll have your turn soon, Edith. I'm about to be arrested myself—for abduction, I suppose. Your mother swore out the warrant."

"My—— Why, what do you mean?"

He told her, and with a glum grin, ended: "It's what you might call poetic justice. I help to heap disgrace on your father—do more than my share, in fact, what with those letters I found—and now you're getting the last laugh."

Her hand stole under his arm and he felt her drawing nearer in the darkness of the cab. Involuntarily he held his breath.

"Ed, I'm not laughing."

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"I know you're not, Edith; but you ought to be."

For a few seconds there was silence. Once more he felt that magnetic nearness.

"Ed, there's a train—the one that carries the papers. It gets into Morganville about six in the morning. I'm—I'm going to take it."

"But you can't do that! After all this? Edith, if you couldn't stand Morganville before, you'll find it intolerable now. Why, Probst says they're all talking about you."

"I know—I know. I'd almost rather die than go back."

"Then why go? It won't do you any good."

"But it'll do you some good, Ed. That—that warrant!"

THE taxicab had halted for a traffic signal, and a boulevard lamp shone upon them through the window. A soft radiance seemed to light Edith's face as he looked at her.

"Edith!"

Ed's arms were around her as the cab lunged away at the change of signal. The warm softness of her, the vivid passion of her was like an inspiring draught. Suddenly Ed felt as though he had at last come home, after years of seeking and roaming. He was peaceful and glad and strong and confident, ready to face the entire world. He felt Edith's hot tears upon his cheeks, her hungry kisses . . . and in that moment he realized that now, by some great miracle, he was holding in his arms the thing he had wanted most in all the world.

Something of his thoughts he put into words:

"Nothing else matters, just so long's I've got you. You're *home,* Edith—precious. Just wherever you are, that's home."

The taxi turned into Huron Street and drew up in front of a shadowy grave front. Edith's boarding-house. They stood on the sidewalk, after the cab had driven away, and tried to pin their minds down to practical matters.

"I suppose there's a detective at the office now, waiting to arrest me," Ed laughed. "Guess I ought to give 'em a ring and find out."

"Well, he'd better keep his hands off you!" muttered Edith, clutching his arm more tightly.

"Why, honey? What'll you do to him?"

"I'll—I'll—I don't know; but he just better not!" Ed saw one small fist clench convulsively. "He'll have to arrest me, too. I'm going where you go."

They walked west towards Clark Street, the street which never sleeps. In a 'phone booth, reeking with cheap perfume and the smell of cigarets, they both stood crowded together while Ed called the office. Ed could hear the head copy boy say, "Here's Loftus, now," and the city editor repeating the words to some one else. Another delay, the sound of a changing connection, a deep, gruff voice. It was the Big Boss himself!

"Loftus?" it began abruptly. "Say, you're taking this thing too seriously."

"Well—well—" Ed stammered.

"A bureau man came over, but I sent him back till tomorrow. Guess you'd better come in and we'll have a talk."

"But I can't! I'm—I'm—I've found Edith, and we're going to be married. Right away. Im—I'm starting for the county clerk's home now. To get a license."

The Big Boss seemed to be sputtering.

"Look here, Loftus; there's no use losing your head like a dam' fool. You haven't done anything. You don't have to marry that girl."

"But I want to," Ed shouted angrily. "Do you hear me? I want to! Wild horses couldn't stop me. Or—or managing editors."

A moment of incredulous silence.

"You want to! You mean you *love* the girl?"

"Yes, I do!"

"Well—that's different! That's——"

A deep chuckling came over the wire, so loud that Edith could hear it as distinctly as Ed himself. Ed laughed, too. It was good to hear the Big Boss chuckle. Chuckling was something he rarely overdid. A shame, too, for he certainly chuckled well.

"Yes, that's different," he finally repeated; and then Ed heard something that made him glow all over. "Good work!" the Big Boss had added.

The Gas Man

—Continued from page 63

South Carolina, Maine. Splendid Beach Fronts. Easy Walk from the Rocky Mountains and Mississippi River. A Few Choice Bungalow Sites Remaining in Georgia and New York. Git Yer Lot Before Prices Double. Fer Particulars Apply to Chris Columbus Improvement Co., Spain. Then I'd a-chartered a line o' steamships——"

"Yeh. Ya'd a-chartered a line o' chatter, awright," agreed Horace Macallister.

This sneer, being unworthy of reply, Hen went smoothly on:

"Now I'll tellya sompn about me, Horrus. The reason why I'm goin' steadily up in the woild while you're a-standin' still is jest this. I got the combination. When it comes to a dee-bate, Resolved that Hen Dall Represents the Spirit of Modern Progress, who is it makes all the speeches fer the affirmative? Hen Dall. When I put up a talk it's so pro-Hen they ain't any other argument scarcely left fer the other side. Whadda I care how many anti-Hens ther is makin' noises like an exhaust pipe blowin' through a mile o' chicken wire?"

Horace rubbed his triple chin and got back on the driver's seat. "Ja know howta git the crowd runnin' to this lousy service station?"

"You're tellin' me," suggested Hen Dall.

"Set fire to it," shouted Horace. "You'll draw a whole lotta people that never knew it was here."

"Yeh?" said Hen, and leaned against the red pump, thinking it over.

Just a Couple of Loud Speakers

—Continued from page 39

tion I knew nothing about. I had told her I was going to Rochester—and I did go. But when I returned she seemed very much hurt and asked me why I had said I was going to Rochester. I insisted I had gone, but she replied that a friend of hers saw Billy and me in a Brooklyn theater. This is what happened:

Two radio men appeared at the Brooklyn movie theater, sang our opening "How Do You Do Everybody" number, and then carried on with gags, solos and duets just as we do. They didn't misrepresent themselves—but they didn't represent themselves either. And by impersonating us, the audience, among which was Mrs. Hare's friend, thought that they were the Happiness Boys.

NOT long ago we drove to a small town in upstate New York to make a personal appearance at the local opera house. Traffic was so jammed that in order to get to the theater on time we shot ahead of the line of waiting cars, and soon heard a motor-cycle cop chugging up behind us. We kept on going, and this chap, whose name was Morgan or Myers or something, followed us right into the theater and down the aisle.

The entertainment had started, and as we went backstage through the door from the boxes he sat down in the audience. We came on with our number, and, when we were through, he strode down the aisle and he handed us a summons across the footlights. We expected it, of course. But what we didn't expect was what was written on the slip of paper.

It read:

"This is a summons for Billy Jones and Ernest Hare to appear three days later at WEAF at 8 o'clock on Friday night."

We must obey the court, so—"Good Night, Everybody, Good Night."

The Captain Herself

—Continued from page 45

word, even if he could do no more.

"Alone?" said Wynyard. "You bet you don't. I'm on."

Hanua looked at him and saw words were useless.

"All same good," he said. "You come alonga me."

FOR four days the two tramped upward through climbing virgin forest. They followed a secret trail, the artery of communication between the mountain and lowland and it clung more or less to the river. The climbing was bitter hard work, for great pitches of precipice, often a hundred feet high, must be attacked, and all about them lay the steamy heat, shut in by mysterious depths of forests.

In the late afternoon of the fourth day they reached a waterfall, a deafening perpendicular plunge where the river broke itself into dust of diamonds in a mighty rocky basin, and then shot swirling away to the lowland. They climbed that precipice, half dead with fatigue, and sitting in a little clearing took out their tucker and ate.

Then, looking round at the impenetrable forest that closed them in, Hanua spoke to a purpose for the first time. Divested of pidgin-English it amounted to this:

They were taking their lives in their hands at every step in this land of the mountains, not to mention the savages beyond, who were holding a devil-ceremony on which to look was death. But if they could arrive before that began Hanua still hoped he might get a hearing. If not, arrows from the bush would be as likely as anything. No, they would not kill the puri-puri man, and they certainly would not use poisoned arrows on Wynyard, because . . . Hanua's eyes blinked and Wynyard could very well tell why. But what must be done was this. They must not approach the village until near dark, and then Hanua must go on alone and Wynyard wait for him. How wait, and where?

A quarter of a mile from the first village—for there were three—was a burying place which no one would go near at night; the corpses laid on branches woven into platforms and raised on poles. This was why Hanua had come by the longer trail leading straight to it, for if Wynyard hid among these he would be safe until Hanua could come and give him news. Agreed, if no better could be, though his own impulse was to rush the village shouting right and left and get the girl off in the confusion. Hanua shook his head vehemently. No, who could tell which village she was in? And the alarm given in vain in one would mean—a native does not willingly mention death, but Hanua conveyed his meaning exactly enough.

Two days later, Wynyard noticed an exaggerated caution in his guide. He became even more silent, and when he was obliged to speak it was under his breath. Presently he stopped and leaving the trail, lay down on his stomach and wormed himself under a thicket of bushes loaded with the gorgeous scarlet blossoms of D'Alberti creeper. Wynyard followed as best he could and with the same caution. He never knew how long they crawled, but it was drawing on to sundown when they came to another clearing—small, with the secrecy of the trees ranked closely about it. Here there were six or eight platforms of interlaced branches uplifted on poles, and those were surrounded with shorter poles of irregular height strangely decorated with skulls and human bones. A terrible odor of death pervaded the place and Wynyard needed no words to tell him they had reached the present end of the journey so far as he was con-

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cerned. Here they halted, and in a thread of a whisper Hanua bid him to hide among the poles and get what sleep he could while he, Hanua, went on to the village.

Hanua drew one or two articles which Wynyard could not distinguish from the bag he carried, fixed his circle of feathers more jauntily on his mop of hair, and without another word glided away through the dense walls of the forest. In about twenty minutes there broke out apparently close at hand a thunderbeat of drums and a devil's chorus of yells. It was the welcome to Hanua, the greatest puri-puri man of the island, and the prelude to—what?

What drove Wynyard half mad was the thought of Java alive or dead in the midst of these raving savages, and for a bad quarter of an hour he felt as if his own mind was slipping. Then, with an immense effort he collected himself. He must believe he could trust Hanua and his powers, or he would go mad.

Followed a frightful silence, broken only by a night breeze creaking in the platforms and giving the illusion that the dead men above were turning in their sleep. A horrible quiet, the background for grim thoughts and fancies. So the night passed in alternate horrors of sound and silence.

WHEN Java was seized and carried up the mountain ways as swiftly as the terrible going would allow she kept her head and her courage, sick and faint as the drug left her for awhile. It was useless to resist, for she was alone among half a dozen or more black fellows. What became of Captain Homan she did not know, but believed they had killed him. That thought also she must endure with the rest.

They put her, carefully enough, on a rough kind of litter of branches, rigged up with four handles, and relieved each other in carrying her up the steep trail. But she would never forget the misery of those boughs. The suffering was awful. After the first day she refused to endure it any longer. The second morning she stood up, white as a lily among them, and kicking the litter away contemptuously, set out on her own, heading upward with never a look behind her. It told, as personal courage always does tell from the South Pole to the North, and she had her way.

With her magnificent health and strength, the exercise, hard as it was, kept her in condition. Also the mountain men took a shorter trail than Hanua could venture on with Wynyard. Wynyard! She thought of him night and day. Did he know it yet? What would he feel? What would he do? She knew the answer to both questions but all her pondering could not find the way he would choose. Would Hanua help or hinder? She touched the steel friend in her bosom.

She never let herself for one moment think how frightened she was, and therefore was never as frightened as she ought to have been. The wild men looked at her as something almost superhuman with her hair, her brave bright eyes and skin as delicate as the petals of the splendid crowds of orchids they passed daily. She was the only white woman they had ever seen and the mere look of her would have startled them, but still more startling were her cool courage and the air of contempt with which she looked upon them and took her own way. And moreover there was behind everything else the unexplained reason for her influence on savages—the reason which Hanua had refused to tell Wynyard.

AT MID-DAY a halt was called and they were sitting under the trees for tucker. She wandered to the bank of a small stream to drink, and as she stooped her foot struck something hard. She felt and picked up a little lump of what looked like glittering feldspar of the oddest shape and perhaps two inches long. It was roughly a misshapen human body with a blob of a head too large in proportion and rudimentary blobs which might suggest arms and legs. She stood looking at it. It was strangely like her mother-of-pearl image. She pulled that out of her breast and compared the two.

There was a cry, a rush, all the men crowding round to see the wonder, black faces thrust as near her as they dared. She drew herself up like a queen. Some remote idea of the consequence of her find stirred in her, though ignorantly.

"Back, all of you!" she cried, and more to the gesture than the words, all were obedient. They slunk back, and stood at a distance, eyes riveted on the marvels. Then she called imperiously to the man who spoke pidgin-English.

"What does it mean?"

"Motu, Motu!" he muttered, and slunk back to the rest.

Motu. She had heard that word down below, the name of a devil-devil, but she knew no more. Nothing more was said. The men moved on keenly alert and on the watch for her every movement. She raged inwardly at her own want of understanding. Still, it had given her the thread of a clue. To play on these people's superstitions, to be strong, proud, unafraid always—that was the way, and the only way she could see.

She held to it even when their arrival at the village was greeted by an outburst of drumming, yelling and shrieking from the crowd assembled. Was it triumph, hatred, or what? She could not tell, but still she held her head high as she marched proudly toward the thatched hut under the nipa palms where she was to be prisoner, guest, victim? Which?

As she neared the threshold there was another yell and a frantic tattoo of drums. She turned, with the fiber curtain in her hand, and looked at them haughtily. As she did so every one of the black, shrieking crowd flung himself prostrate on the ground and hid his face in a silence almost more terrifying than the uproar.

She dropped the curtain and went in. What could it mean?

"Will they starve me, I wonder!" was her first thought, but that question answered itself very soon. There was fish from the river, baked on hot stones, and sweet potatoes and fruit.

When she had eaten and rested she hesitated what to do. Anything was better than to remain shut up in dead loneliness in the hut, and besides, she thought

it wise to assert herself as a free woman. She put on her hat and tried to summon up the right expression. "I must look as if I'd bought and paid for the whole show," and with the pearl-shell Motu hung on her breast she went coolly into the dying sunset.

It was a scattered village, not palisaded as usual, for the neighboring villages were friends and brothers. Little trails ran from house to house. Apart from the rest stood the great mysterious Talking Hall, where huge devil-devils, with hollow boo-boos in attendance, were housed in state. The village evidently took its devil-worship very seriously. As she walked Java saw all the black eyes fixed on the shimmering Motu about her neck, and knew that the story of her magic powers had got abroad.

More and more she felt courage and disdain were the only armor. So she paced up and down until it was dark except for the moonlight, and not a soul molested her. Suddenly a loud call stopped her, followed by an outbreak of drumming, yelling and shouting. Even the great boo-boos added their roar to the deafening din as all the people, men, women and children, came hurrying out of their houses.

A figure, rattling with chains of shells and beads, gorgeous with parrot plumes, carrying in his hand a club carved atop into a shape like a Motu with dog's teeth for eyes, was advancing slowly from the bush; a terrible figure, with painting and tattooing distorting the face from all humanity—Hanua.

In a second he was lost to sight among the crowding men, for the women stood back, herding together like frightened animals. The men jabbered, they shouted, they pointed in wild excitement to Java, the word "Motu" was tossed to and fro in shrieks and yells of frenzy.

For a moment the blood fell away from her face and she thought her last hour had come. Then hope, for the first time, glimmered in her heart. Her quick eye had seen at once that it was Hanua, and that might mean good beyond all her hopes. Her quick wits told her she must not lower herself by seeking him. Dignity, coolness—those were the watchwords. She turned quietly back to her hut and let the curtain fall behind her, and then sat in expectation so tense that she trembled with excitement.

Neither. Nothing happened. Outside there was now silence. The voices had ceased and night possessed the place. She waited for half an hour and then, lifting the curtain before the doorway, stepped out into the open space under the trees. The moon was low.

A dark figure stood on guard near her hut. Slowly it detached itself from the shadows and came toward her. Hanua.

When Java tried to collect that talk in her mind later she passed over the pidgin-English and remembered it only as short and simple as words could be.

"You here," he said. "*Toubada* there." And pointed toward the bush.

Her heart made a leap, then settled and seemed to stop in the extreme need for composure.

"Captain?"

"Young *taubada*. He come alonga me."

"I knew it!" her heart told her. A warm flush ran up her face. "Where?" she asked quickly.

He pointed again. "Near. He there."

There was a moment's silence, then, looking straight in his eyes, she said slowly:

"Tell me why they took me, Hanua. Am I to be killed, or is it money? You good man, you tell."

Hanua shifted the great shell necklaces until they rattled again. Evidently he had no fear of being heard or seen. A few heads looked out and drew in hurriedly—they must not interrupt the puri-puri man in his talk with the daughter of the Motu—great and terrible magic must be in the air when those two met. He gathered all his store of pidgin-English to talk with her.

It appeared that when she had come to the island, the first thing the people noticed was the pearl Motu on her breast; Motu, the god who gives long life and plenty of yams and pigs and many sons and victory over all enemies. It is good magic to make images of Motu, for if not he will send the black hunger and death to a dying people, but it is tremendous magic if anything is found even remotely resembling him. And once only in the memory of man had such a thing turned up, the stump of a dead tree, and this, conveyed with immense ceremony to the island of Oratu, had brought with it such good luck that no people could stand against those fortunate ones. The very earth gave them riches and they waxed fat on the bodies of their enemies because the mighty Motu had come to dwell among them.

But now behold! On the breast of a white girl, a Motu such as had never been seen in the world before, a splendid Motu, shining in rainbow colors. If that could be added to the first, the people of the islands would rule the world and even death cease from among them.

"They flenty fool, black fella!" added Hanua contemptuously. He had been to Port Moresby. He knew a world where Motus counted for nothing and gold and steel for everything. And while as a sorcerer he was quite prepared to live on the beliefs of his people, he was also quite prepared to make the best of each world in turn.

BESIDES, he added, Missy had found another Motu on the way up, and the men trembled at this sign of supernatural favor. In other words, she was the beloved of the gods. No wonder the harvests, the paradise plumes, everything, had prospered with the captains; how could it be otherwise? No harm could come near them while Motu rained blessings on them with both arms, for hands he had none.

Java digested this in silence. Who could have forseen it? And what was the way out?

"Will they kill me and take the Motu?" she asked at last.

Hanua's whole body rattled with scorn and shells at the notion. Kill? Kill the daughter of the god? Not they! Blue ruin would descend on them if they dared! No, but they would keep her as a precious talisman forever. They would take her to Oratu, the outermost of the cannibal

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islands, and build her a house of honor with a court of devil-devils and boo-boos, and when she died—if ever she did die—her body would for ever give oracles to the trembling people.

There was that in Hanua's eye, a gleam which suggested his belief that such a glorious destiny might appeal to any woman if only she understood it rightly. Java made short work of that.

"S'pose I give them the Motu?" she said.

He shook his head. That was good talking, certainly, but what they wanted was the Motu's white daughter. Twice the god had come to her. In all the islands was nothing so valuable as the living Motu she had become. In the big *sempsi* (devil-ceremony) next night they would worship her as they would the Motu himself if he came among them.

Java stood thinking deeply.

"You doing puri-puri," she said abruptly. "You taking me *taubada* now. *Now.* No, *now!* I go now, you come too."

Hanua looked at her set face and his heart shrank within him for terror. Now—in the night—to the place of the dead men, and with the Motu upon her breast!

"Missy no been go. Dead men there."

"Now!" she said superbly. "You telling these black fella great puri-puri. If you no come, I calling out loud and break the Motu. I say you do it."

She took the feldspar Motu from her breast pocket and held it in her hand, prepared to bash its pearl fellow to bits, then walked slowly down between the houses.

Hanua, desperate, lifted his voice in a cry. In a moment the place was alive and awake, for he called in his own tongue that all the world might understand.

"The daughter of the Motu goes to do puri-puri among the dead men of Oratu!" he chanted. "Let not a man, woman or child stir until I give the word, lest the devil-death come upon him from the bush. See, she has no fear! On her breast she carries the image of her father, in her hand his image also. Put out the lights and hide your faces!"

EVERY little twinkling light went out as she passed steadily on with Hanua following at her heels, his tail between his legs in spite of his brave words. At that moment she neither thought nor calculated. It was just a chance, perhaps the last, that was all. She strung herself up to take it.

The bush closed about them.

They walked along a narrow path, single file, for perhaps twenty minutes or less. At the edge of the clearing under the first elevated bier Hanua stopped with decision.

"Missy going on. I stopping."

"Straight on?"

She pointed. He nodded and stood stiffly still in a shaft of fading moonlight. There was a horrid silence in the place.

Then very softly, like the voice of a bird in the night, she called.

"Mr. Wynyard!"

A movement, nearer than she expected. She could not see where, for the moon was dropping below the trees—but near! Then the dimness of a shape, soft steps, and suddenly two arms about her and a speechless sound like a strangled sob of joy.

"Java, my own love—my darling!"

No more was needed. She had no thought of delay or holding back. She clung to him with a shower of tears and kisses. What did trouble or danger matter in that heavenly moment while she lay quivering on his breast with his cheek pressed to hers?

But it could not last. Java drew herself apart and looked at Wynyard, wan in the dying moonlight. Love must make way while she told her story in as few words as possible, for minutes were more precious than gold.

"Could we find the trail and make a shot for it now?" she asked earnestly when she had finished.

"Hanua might give the alarm, and we have no food, nothing. No, we must talk to him."

They went back, hand in hand, to where he stood like a statue, and Wynyard spoke. The strength of purpose seemed to have gone out of Java and he took the lead as by right, Java following with womanly submission.

"Hanua, what can we do?"

But there was no answer. The man stood stiff and staring, at his wits' end, with no suggestions to make. Wynyard turned impatiently to Java.

"We must think for ourselves, and I *can't* think! Shall we strike out for home?"

She looked firmly at him.

"Useless. We're neither of us certain of the way and the trails cross here and there. We should die in the bush."

"But together," he said, in a voice where love touched despair.

Her eyes shone upon him.

"Better live together! Hanua, make a great puri-puri and I give you this—see!"

She took the pearl Motu from where it shimmered on her breast and offered it and the other. Hanua stared incredulous, speechless, as she thrust them into his hand. She went on eagerly.

"You. For you! You taking. Big puri-puri, flenty flighten black fella. You been see? Now?"

She did not herself know what she meant, for the strange minds and beliefs of these people were beyond her, but Hanua knew. He might help. Fear—that was the only weapon.

The statue starting into rattling life. The Motu appealed to him as gold, diamonds, riches unspeakable, appeal to the white man. With those Motus his world was at his feet. He laid down the club he carried and his eyes glittered with strange eagerness. A thought had come to him, to be turned into astonishing action.

From his canvas bag, the spoil of some wandering beach-comber, he drew shell necklaces, plates of tortoise shell, tusks, a feather head-dress and parrot plumes and laid them on the ground, then put a black grasp on Java.

"You stand still, Missy, you watchum. You see."

Wynyard started forward, but she stood tense, staring fixedly at Hanua.

"You stand, *taubada*. You no flighten. I makum you big puri-puri man. You see."

From the bag he drew also a tin, the

unromantic relic of canned soup, and with it a brush of fiber. He dipped this in the tin and it emerged smeared with a shining stuff which emitted an unholy glimmer. With this he painted Wynyard's face and throat till he became a mask of white fire, really terrible to see, for the features disappeared in the luminosity, all but the eyes and mouth, which he painted in heavily with black. Not for nothing had he come prepared to do himself credit in the great devil-ceremony of the mountains, and certainly the way the black eyes and mouth glared out of the mask of fire was a masterpiece. He tore open Wynyard's shirt and set his breast diabolically aflame. He slung a panoply of shells and tusks about Wynyard's broad shoulders, and then, stopping for a moment, looked up at the sky and muttered:

"Him flenty dark now," and to work again.

From his bag he took the wig he himself wore on high days, a terrible mop of dead chiefs' hair and plumes, and fastened it securely on his victim's head with a crown of parrot feathers, touching all with fire until it flamed phosphorescent in the dark above the hideous face with its black glare of eyes and lips. Lastly he completed the toilet with a stiff skirt of dried grass and leaves that stood out like a pen-wiper about Wynyard's body. This he also streaked with flame, standing back at last to regard his finished work.

Wynyard looked ruefully at Java without the remotest notion of what the man intended. A hard fate for a lover to be made ridiculous in his lady's eyes, he thought, and in the first blossom of courtship!

"I feel more like a devil than a man," he said. "What on earth does the ass mean?"

She stared at his ghastly figure, hideously illuminating the dark, and then the unexpected happened. She began to tremble from head to foot.

"I—I d-don't know what's come to me. I think I'm going to cry!" she faltered with her hands to her face, and suddenly and violently went off into screaming hysterics, nearly frightening Wynyard and Hanua into fits.

Mother Nature knows her business. The girl had endured heroically for days of agony, bearing it all in silence, and this was the relief she needed. Her screams rang through the trees, she sat rocking herself to and fro, sobbing and laughing like one distracted, utterly unable to control herself. The more Wynyard tried to sympathize the worse she grew. She would be deadly ashamed of herself afterward, but she could no more help it now than she could stop breathing, and it probably saved her from a complete breakdown later. He clapped his hand on her mouth, expecting to see the savages rushing in on them. Hanua caught the hand.

"Good, good!" he cried. "You come alonga me now, *taubada*, now! You keep scream, Missy, like cockatoo!"

He tore along the trail to the village without another word, dragging Wynyard after him—the village where all the horror-stricken people, hearing the appalling shrieks from the dead men's place, were looking from their huts, afraid to venture a step further. To their minds hell was let loose with a vengeance that night. Hanua, holding Wynyard by the hand, a figure so frightful that the sorcerer himself scarcely dared look on the awful glimmering thing he had made, shouted aloud to the night!

"Men of Oratu, men of the Great Tribes, come out! Behold the holy Motu living and on earth, for he has come to visit his good people. He has taken his puri-puri from his daughter forever, and you may hear her screaming and crying in the dead men's place because her father has forsaken her and taken all his magic away. Big magic gone forever. And he has given it to me—to Hanua who speaks with you!" He held aloft the two Motus in his hand.

There was a silence as he paused for breath, and then wild and loud burst out the shouts of joy and relief, mingled with the shrill cries of the women. They shrieked, and the great conch shells added their roar to the clamor.

"Tomorrow fast and be patient till I return, for I take her to her people. Her father, the holy Motu, has cast her off and will have none of her any more. There is no good in her now; she is but a useless woman like any other, good for nothing but to bear children and obey her husband. But do honor to the holy Motu for never again will your eyes behold him."

In the appalling silence Wynyard raised his two fiery hands and with his black lips executed a grin worthy of the highest circles of island divinity. He saw the whole assembly sink on their knees with faces to the earth, and knew the sorcerer was triumphant.

OF THE journey down to the lowlands Java could have told very little. She was thoroughly ashamed of herself and would never again feel that men were made only to be bumped into the paths of peace by their womenkind. For if one could not count on oneself in an emergency, if one screamed and shrieked like a child and had to leave action to others, what could be said for one as a leader of men?

Plenty, and Wynyard said it again and again with the tenderest adoration as they threaded the downward trail, guided by Hanua strutting in front, sleek with self-satisfaction.

Privately he was inclined to think that he owed his inspiration to the pearl Motu. It had certainly flashed on him with that precious image in his hand. Outwardly he grunted contemptuously at the superstitions of the benighted heathen.

"Black fella, he flenty fool. He b'lieve anything longa me."

"But, Roger, you were enough to drive them all mad. You were a gorgeous Motu. When I remember—" Java began, as Hanua strutted on again. Her lips trembled and her eyes were dancing.

"For God's sake, don't remember!" pleaded Wynyard, utterly humiliated. "When I remember that grass petticoat and my legs . . ."

"I shall never forget your legs as long as I live," declared Java, and exploded.

When they reached the edge of the swamp Hanua sent a cooee screeching through the air that made every man drop his work, stand for a second like a black statue, and then tear yelling to Stephano-

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